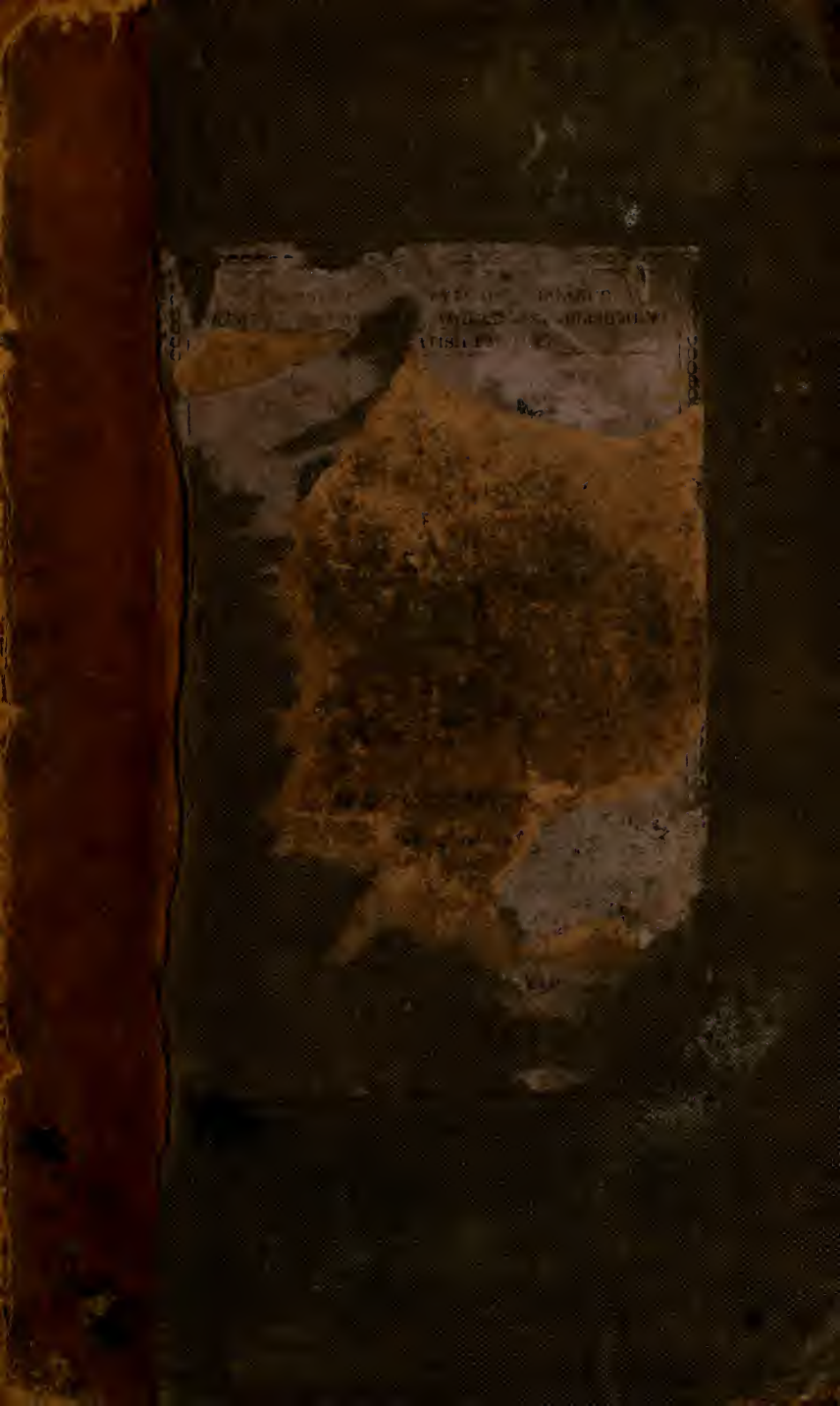

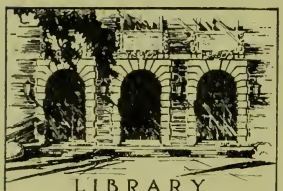

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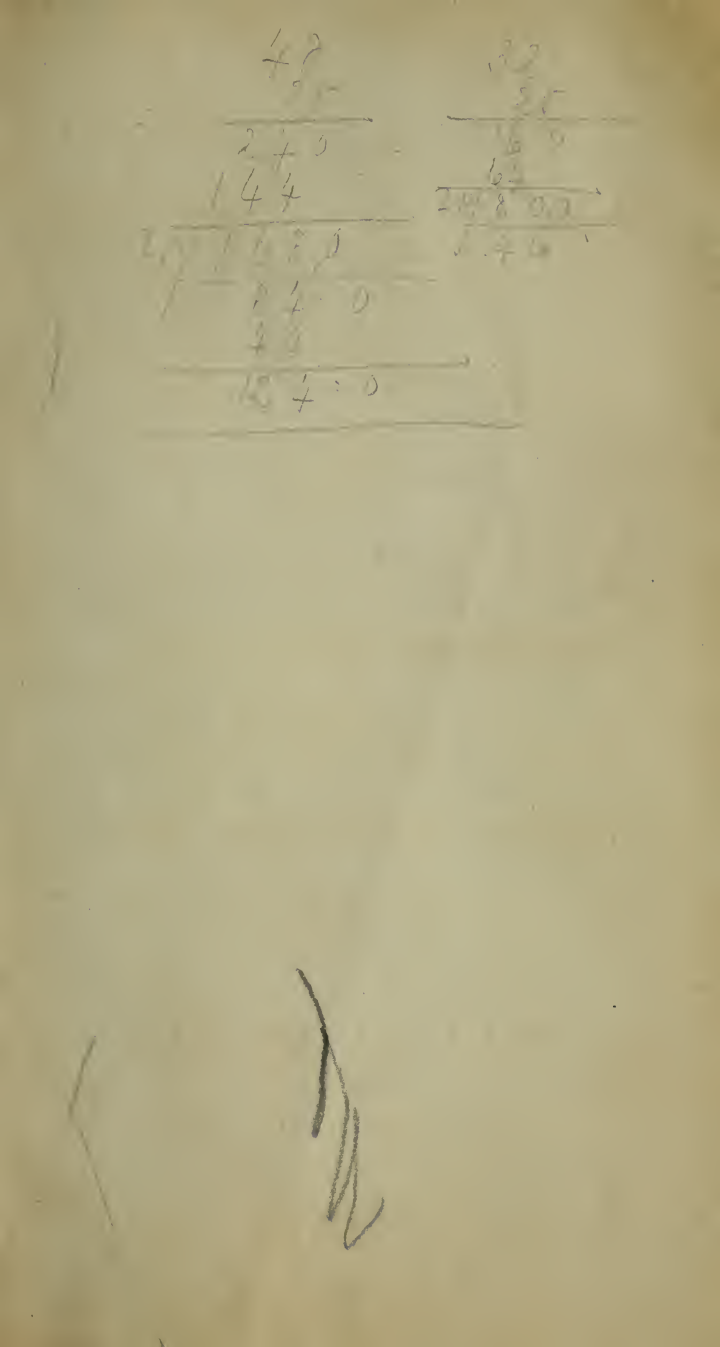

THE WIFE HUNTER,

AND

FLORA DOUGLAS:

TALES BY

THE MORIARTY FAMILY.

EDITED BY

DENIS IGNATIUS MORIARTY, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE WIFE HUNTER,

CONTINUED.

THE WIFE HUNTER.

CHAPTER XIX.

" Ah, quel charmant pays, ma chère,
Quel paradis, que notre Paris !
Il valait tout l'Angleterre ;
Et, pour le sentiment,
Ah ! le beau departement ! "

ROMANCE FRANÇAISE.

" WELL," said I, " I think your country friends have lost no time in renewing their acquaintance."

" Oh ! it 's a confounded bore !" exclaimed Murrough, with a sigh.

" Now Murrough, I think you've no right to complain ; this evening you have been particularly fortunate. On all former occasions both ladies made love to you together ; whereas Emily was your sole assailant now."

" That is because Harriet was too much *abbattue* after her long journey; I owe my exemption to her weariness. To-morrow, when she is a little rested, I suppose I must, as usual, sustain the full brunt of both their attacks. But, seriously, I will stand it no longer. Only conceive, if any decent being, whose opinion I value, were to see me in company with such antiques !"

" Or driving their carriage through town ;" added I. Murrough laughed.

" In fact," said he, " I must shake them off, and the sooner the better, for they are pefectly intolerable."

" Now Murrough, observe, that I will not sanction any impoliteness; that is totally out of the question. But if you want to get rid of them, I promise you I'll teach you an admirable mode of making *them* shake *you* off, which will answer your purpose, without impairing your reputation for politeness."

" Excellent," said Murrough ; " let me hear your plan."

But we had now reached my grandfather's house in Stephen's Green, so that I was obliged to defer the detail of my plan till some other opportunity. As the door opened, Mrs. Herbert appeared in the hall, and embraced me with the fondest parental affection. I am proud in being able to say, that whatever may have been my faults, the prevalent and brainless contempt for old women, that distinguishes youth, never was one of them. I loved my excellent grandmother better than any other creature in the world; I respected her good sense and her virtues, and I never can reflect without the warmest admiration, on the ardent love of Ireland which at all times peculiarly marked her character; and which she invariably laboured to instil into her grandson. And in this point the old lady's lessons produced the desired effect. Her first and last passion was her native country. She resembled one of the ancient Roman matrons, who did not deem any sacrifice too great to promote the independence and prosperity of the land of their birth.—She re-

ceived Murrough with much cordiality, and thanked him for the efforts he had made to secure my return for Kilshindy.

"Grant has fully repaid me," said Murrough, "by his efforts to secure my election for the county, so our accounts are evenly balanced."

"You have both accepted of a heavy trust," she continued; "I hope you will be faithful to it."

"Oho!" exclaimed my grandfather, glancing at the evening paper, which had just come in, (the Hibernian Mercury,) "I see you've lost no time, gentlemen! I protest you astonish me! Here are to-day's debates up to four o'clock, and speeches from Tighe, Duquery, Grattan, Sir Lawrence Parsons, Murrough O'Driscoll, and O'Brien Grant! Why, lads, I heartily congratulate you Let me see if your ideas merit approbation as much as your readiness to give them utterance. 'Friendly sentiments towards Britain,'" he continued reading, "ay, right! I like that—'generous spirit of Ireland'—better and better still—'ever ready to succour England

on every occasion of emergency'—quite right, my boy!—'Ireland not only owes it to her present safety, but she owes it to her honour, to her fame, and to her legislative independence.' Right, Jack Grant—why you're just the very thing, man. Now comes Mr. Murrough O'Driscoll—' cordially concurs in the generous sentiments towards England expressed by the honourable member for Kilshindy, and although ardently attached to public economy, yet will vote for the grant upon principles of urgent necessity—considers every exertion indispensably requisite at this crisis to avert from Ireland the French deluge of jacobinism and irreligion which threatens to overwhelm Europe'—Excellent, Mr. O'Driscoll—I warmly approve of your sentiments and language."

At the word "irreligion," Mrs. Herbert had involuntarily given an incredulous look, as if she marvelled at hearing a word in support of law, or faith, or order, ascribed to the mysterious and incomprehensible Murrough. But Murrough's countenance was quite in conformity with the

sentiment. He had moulded it into an expression of such decent and resolute sobriety, that he looked the very personification of law and good order.

" I shall go to the gallery of the House, Mr. O'Driscoll, the first night that either you or Grant mean to speak."

" I assure you, Madam, that your presence will incite me to increased exertion."

Dinner was now announced; Mr. Herbert expressed his surprise that some gentlemen whom he had invited were not yet arrived, when a knock at the hall-door announced Father O'Leary, and a half French half German Count Klopstockendock.

" I had almost despaired of your appearance, gentlemen," said Mr. Herbert; " I believe it is now considerably after seven."

" I tought dat Monsieur's card say huit heures," apologised the Count.

" Sept heures," said Mr. Herbert, smiling.

" Ah, ma foi! den here is de grand mischiefs of being so extrêmement recherché—I

had twenty—tirty invitation for dis day, and some of dem say six heures et demi—some of dem say seben heures, and oders say huit heures. En verité, I tought Monsieur's card say huit heures—I vas perplex among dem all."

"As for me," said Father O'Leary, "I have not Count Klopstockendock's apology to plead, of mistaking the hour, for I candidly confess that I lingered at my lodgings, Mrs. Fleming's in Grafton Street, for the pleasure of laughing at a most farcical altercation on the stairs between two old maids and my landlady. They were Misses O'Moore, from some wild part of Connaught, I believe, and wanted to take lodgings—they got into rather an ungracious wrangle about the prices of first floors and second floors, or some such thing, and on Mrs. Fleming's persisting in the price she asked, the elder lady talked big about the laws against extortion, and about her own influential connexions; and she threatened Mrs. Fleming she would have her brought before the House of

Commons by the member for the county Galway, Mr. Murrough O'Driscoll, to whom, she hinted, she was going to be married. Immediately the other Miss O'Moore, who had hitherto been silent, asserted a personal interest for herself in the honourable member, which produced a brisk wrangle between the sisters on the subject of the gentleman's affections, interspersed with alternate snaps from both at Mrs. Fleming on the subject of the lodgings. So I left the trio in ferocious contention, which I fancy is not ended yet."

Mrs. Herbert's countenance was expressive of polite distress, when Murrough, bowing to Father O'Leary, said, "Permit me, sir, to introduce to you Mr. Murrough O'Driscoll." The priest stared and reddened. "Nay," pursued Murrough, "let me beg that you may not experience the slightest uneasiness from the humorous story you have told—I have the honour of being in a slight degree acquainted with the Misses O'Moore, and I rather think they are

in some respects eccentric." The polite frankness of Murrough's manner quite relieved O'Leary from pain.

" I have to beg your forgiveness, Mr. O'Driscoll;" said he, " I am sorry I mentioned the delicate incident of the Misses O'Moore's declaration of attachment."

" Not at all, not at all," said Murrough; " on the contrary, I feel most particularly flattered by their preference, though I cannot possibly conceive by what process they contrived to convert their flattering partiality into a prospect of my being married to—to one, or both, did you say?"

" To both I should think," replied O'Leary; " oh, certainly to both. To confine your attentions to one would reduce the other to despair."

" Well, then," resumed Murrough, " in that case the rivalship renders their kind preference the more complimentary."

" Assurément," said Count Klopstockendock; " I did know one gentilhomme in France—I vould not presume to hint dat he vas one of

de present compagnie—oh ! que non—dat vould be trop presomptueux ! it is enough for to say dat he vas homme marquant et distingué, and as to his personal mérite, ah, ma foi ! he vas trés galant—trés favorisé par les dames ! mais n'importe—dere vas a comtesse and a duchesse—dey were folles ! entrainées ! eperdues ! all about dis chevalier ; tout le monde at Paris talk of noting else ; and everybody say it vould be necessaire for dis monsieur de s'eloigner—in short, to quit Paris, for de comtesse and de duchesse were distraites !"

" The chevalier must have felt much embarrassed," said Mrs. Herbert.

" Oh, point du tout ; no Frenchman ever does. Mais écoutez donc—what tink you dese ladies did ?"

" I am sure I cannot tell."

" Dey fought a duel about monsieur."

" A duel ?

" Mais oui—de comtesse shoot de duchesse in de leg—she fall, she tink she go to die ; de

comtesse embrasse her, screaming furieusement. —' Ah, je vous pardonne !' s'écria la duchesse, ' je vous pardonne vid all my heart, for I ave conquer you ! '

" ' You ave conquer me ?' reply de comtesse ; ' mais comment ? '

" ' Because,' exclaim de duchesse en triomphe, ' I ave de gloire and de honneur to die for de most charmant of his sexe. De victory is mine. Je meurs heureuse.'

" Dis noble sentiment overcome de rivalry of madame la comtesse. ' Ah, duchesse,' she exclaim, ' je vous demande mille pardons ! I vil not contest him no more vid you. Live for him ! take him ! he shall be yours ! you are wordy of him ! '

" De lover chance to pass, he kiss de blood dat flow on de ground for his sake, he bind up de wound—he embrasse de duchesse for her true affection—he embrasse de comtesse for her generosité. He start to his feet ! he slap his forehead — he vas puzzle between de deux dames, dey were both si charmantes, si de-

vouées! De magnanimous comtesse resolve upon a coup magnifique et éclâtant——

" ' Duchesse! ' she exclaim, ' je vous le rends entiérement! I do give him all to you! but I cannot live vidout him—I vill die! Chére duchesse, I bequeath to you all de beaux fleurs dat you admire so much in de jardin at Epergny, and all de diamond necklace and aigrette, and de coiffure-aux-rubans dat le Dauphin admire. Ven you wear dem you will quelquefois tink of me—Adieu, ma vie! Adieu, vie courte et miserable!' and de comtesse shoot herself dead. Ciel! quel grandeur d'âme!

" Ah, it vas bien tragique! De duchesse and her chevalier vas inconsolable—dey cry, dey faint, and dey write a noble melodrame sur le sujet, which vas brought out dat winter at de Thêatre Français."

" I hope," said O'Leary, " that the rivalry of the Misses O'Moore may not terminate so fatally."

" Ah, dere is no fear of dat—it is only in France we do find dese beaux sentimens—

pardonnez—but you never won't see une Irlandaise wid so much *sensibilité*."

" Why, Monsieur le Comte, I should scarcely wish to see our Irish ladies obtain celebrity as duellists," said Mr. Herbert; " but dinner, I perceive, has been a second time announced, which will give us a more agreeable mode of employing our time. Let me first, however, have the honour of presenting to you Mr. O'Brien Grant."

The Count bowed, and expressed his sense of " honneur, plaisir;" I was then introduced to O'Leary and the other gentlemen, and we proceeded to the dining room.

After dinner the gentlemen sat long, and I took an early occasion to leave them and follow Mrs. Herbert to the drawing room.

This apartment was finished in a style of rich substantial decoration, which one vainly looks for in the more modern houses that have been erected in Dublin since the Union. The ceiling represented the Judgment of Paris, beautifully executed in stucco by an Italian artist. The

doorways were enriched with Corinthian columns and pediments, and round the walls hung several full length portraits of our family in magnificent frames. An air of great cheerfulness and warmth was diffused over the whole, by the blazing sea-coal fire in the chimney.

A Pembroke table stood in the centre of the room, on which was placed a tall, slender, old-fashioned, silver tea-urn, and a set of *real* Indian china, over which the urn constantly sent forth a cloudy canopy of steam. Two splendid dragon vases stood upon a side-table, and were filled, even at that season, with exotic flowers from the green-house, on the management of which the old lady not a little piqued herself.

I looked at one of the portraits, representing a youthful and beautiful woman, her hair combed straight upwards on that ancient assistant of the chevelure entitled a "system;" and confined with a simple blue ribbon.

"That was my sister Augusta," said Mrs. Herbert with a sigh, "your grand-aunt, my dear. She is dead many years, but she is as

present to my memory as if we had only parted yesterday. Alas! so passes life. Some years hence you will remember this evening, my dear boy, as I now remember my sister—as something which is past and gone, but must ever retain a strong hold on the memory. Would you value those family pictures?"

"Undoubtedly, ma'am."

"Then I must tell you they are all intended for you. Hereafter you will have them to adorn Kilnaflesk, including my portrait yonder, which now seems ridiculous enough when you contrast it with the original."

I looked at the portrait, which really bore as strong a resemblance to Mrs. Herbert as youthful beauty could to venerable age. The artist had chosen to represent the lady in a fantastically graceful attitude, resembling one of the movements of the shawl dance. The face was slightly averted, and the eyes glanced archly over the left shoulder, while the beautiful and taper fingers retained the ends of a purple

scarf that overarched the head and almost seemed to flutter in the wind.

"You smile," said my grandmother, as I looked alternately at her and at the picture; "you would not suspect me, from my present sedate appearance, of ever having been an attitudinizer, nor in truth was I; but Herbert took a fancy to the attitude, and to gratify him I consented to be drawn in it. Our gasconading Count was looking at these pictures the other day, and expressed great admiration of the frames. I asked him if he did not admire the paintings, 'Mais oui,' said he, 'but in general I don't never care for de pictures, I only do care for de frames.' There's a man of taste for you!"

"What stiff stays that lady seems to have," said I, regarding another of the portraits.

"That is my aunt, Lady Henrietta O'Brien; her figure is rigidity itself. The portrait was taken in the year 1756, when the unmanageable stiffness of stays was the cause of introducing a ridiculous custom in Dublin for one

or two seasons. The stays were quite too stiff to permit the wearer to bow; so that when ladies, passing each other in the street in their carriages, recognised their friends and acquaintance, they were utterly unable to evince their recognition in the usual manner. To remedy this, little puppets called 'Pantons' were hung up in the windows of the carriage, and these little figures nodded on pulling a string. So that when a stiffened, immovable lady recognised an acquaintance in any passing carriage, she pulled the string, her Panton nodded, and the nod was immediately returned in like manner by the Panton from the other carriage. I think that Lady Henrietta should have been painted with her Panton in her hand."

"What a strangely ridiculous fashion!" said I.

"Yes, we laugh at it now, in this age of relaxation from rigidity in dress, and in morals, and in everything. Forty years hence, our descendants will be laughing at us. Heigho! But, Grant, my dear, you have not told me one

word of the impression which Dublin has made upon you. A young man's first entrance into a metropolis is an era in his life."

" Indeed, ma'am, you know the only impression that Dublin could make on such a raw unpractised rustic as I am, must be one of astonishment at its magnificence. I was greatly struck with the front of the House of Commons to-day, but I really think the effect of the portico by torch-light this evening was finer. As for this part of the town, we drove along so very rapidly, and in the dark too, that I can't say anything of it.

" Open the window, my dear, and look out."

I did so, and beheld a lovely scene. The moon had risen, and was sailing through a clear unclouded sky, dotted with numberless stars. The huge, dark mass of buildings at the farther side of Stephen's Green, was discerned through the lines of tall old elms *, now bare and leafless, that ran round the

* Planted in the reign of King Charles the Second, and cut down, I believe, in 1815 or 1816.

square; the irregular roof-line was clearly defined against the moonlight sky; the distant rows of lamps glimmered red in the frosty atmosphere as they peeped at intervals through the thickets of evergreen shrubs; and the surface of the Green, within the enclosure, was crisped into innumerable frosty particles that sparkled like diamonds. The deepest repose pervaded the whole scene, only broken by the occasional faint rumble of a distant wheel, the drowsy call of the watchman, or the mellow chime of a bell. While I gazed, Count Klopstockendock and Father O'Leary entered from the dining room.

"Ah, ciel!" cried the Count, putting his handkerchief to his face, "you ave open de fenétre—ah! I am a fear madame will catch de rheumatiz, or de catch-cold."

"Do not be afraid, Count," said my grandmother; "I am very well protected by this screen; Mr. Grant wished to see the Green by moonlight."

"Ah, ciel! den Monsieur admire de moon,

apparément. She is de one heavenly flambeau. Ah! you must not tink dat I am not homme de goût! I admire de moon extrêmement, she is so like one bijou of a moon we ave make at de Thêatre Français. Ah! I ave memory of a charmante little vaudeville we had at de Thêatre Français—it vas all about de moon,

> ' Ta belle lumiére
> Comme elle nous éclaire '.

Ma foi, I do forget de rest."

I had closed the window, perceiving that the Count was afraid of the night air, and our party drew our chairs round the fire. We talked over the news and the incidents of the day. The Count informed us he was bien choqué, passing the Four Courts during the afternoon, at seeing two men, apparently in a fit of insanity, spring from the quays into the river.

" I hope their lives were saved," said Mrs. Herbert."

" Ah oui—yes—deir lifes vas save, for I call

out hautement to a barque dat vas pass at de time, and de matelôts—vat you call sailors pick dem up."

"Was it not strange, Count," asked O'Leary, "that of all the thousands who crowded the quays to-day, you were the only person who called to the boatmen to assist the poor men that sprang into the river?"

"Ah, Monsieur de Leary, dere is not no wonder at all, for I ave got my wit about me always."

"Were the quays much crowded?" demanded Mrs. Herbert.

"Crowded," said O'Leary, "so crowded, it seems, that the people were jumping into the river."

"Ahi! den dat is de fine flight of fancy! hi! hi! hi! it is one superb idée! Mais, grand ciel! why ave you not got no *gens-d'armes* to keep de canaille from crowding up de streets, as we had in Paris under de ancien régime?"

"That would be too arbitrary a proceeding, Count, for this land of liberty."

"Ah! la liberté! la liberté! dat is de cry. And vat liberté, je vous demande, do canaille ever want, but de liberté to eat and to drink, and to see de Grand Monarque in his state carosse on de Sunday or de holiday? Is not dat enough to satisfy dem? Dey are born for de toil, and we for de enjoyment. La belle liberté! oh! venever I give de liberté to my dog or my horse, I vil give it to de canaille—Sacre!"

O'Leary entered into a playful refutation of the arbitrary principles expressed by Klopstockendock, and asked him in the course of the debate, if he would relish in his own proper person the chains which he felt no repugnance to impose upon others.

"Oh, que non! but den, my goot friend, you must remember I ave got de *lumiéres*—I ave all de light and de sagesse, and de canaille are tout-a-fait bêtes—ignorans!"

"I do not mean at all to dispute your superior attainments, Count; but your principles would extend to deprive the people of personal

liberty; you would establish gens-d'armes to keep them out of the streets; and I really think that a man may be permitted to enjoy the freedom of our public thoroughfares without being a sublime and enlightened philosopher."

"Ah, dat is all ver fine sans doute, but vat do I care wheder dey walk dere or no, so dat I am not jostle or shove in de street by dem? A shimney-sweep brush by me dis day, and he black my *culottes-à-la-Reine* vid his damn sacque—Diantre! Where is de politesse or de philosophie in dat?"

"Certainly it is shocking! horrifying to think of. But I would not resort to extremes while milder measures can effect the purpose quite as well. Now, I would prefer keeping out of this degrading and disagreeable contact with the canaille, by moving through the streets in the dignified exaltation of my *carosse;* which would not only be far more befitting the exalted rank of Count Klopstockendock, but tend to impress upon the crowd a salutary

sense of the distinction of ranks in general; since nature has furnished all men with legs, but it is only the élite who move, or at least who *ought* to move, in coaches."

"Grand ciel! but I believe you ave raison—Grand ciel! but you say ver true—de shimney-sweep ave got de leg as goot as monseigneur le duc! it is a damn, roturier way of moving, derefore, and any homme comme il faut who do practise it, vil deserve to be jostle by de canaille. Sacre! I never won't walk in de street any more."

"Then I hope," said O'Leary, "you abandon your defence of dispersing the crowds by violent measures?"

"Assurément—dat is, I believe so. Pauvres diables!"

"For I know," said Mrs. Herbert, "you would not like the deprivation of personal freedom in your own case."

"Ah, Madame! dere is only de one case in which I vould consent for to rendre my liberté—and dat is to de chére maitresse of my affec-

tions. I vould love de slavery,—I vould hate de liberté, dans un tel cas! de empire of de heart can't never be too despotic—dat's my principes."

The Count soon after withdrew. "I believe," said I, "Monsieur de Klopstockendock is not a fair specimen of a Frenchman."

"Certainly not," replied Mrs. Herbert; "besides, he is a kind of nondescript; his name is German, and his country and connexions, as far as we can learn them, are French."

"Perhaps he is an impostor," said I.

"One can scarcely suppose that he is, for he has been received at the Castle, and at several houses of distinction. The first day I met him was at old lady Kilgarriff's; he was earnestly assuring her that she vould be charmante! divine! if she used the slightest touch of rouge. Her ladyship is older than I am; but age, it would seem, is no protection against female vanity; for ever since, the venerable wrinkles of her face are streaked with lines of red."

"I understand," observed O'Leary, "that the Count plays deep, and is always successful."

"Possibly," said I, "he may be one of those gentlemen described by Count Basset, whose coaches run on the four aces."

"He has not been uniformly successful of late," observed Mrs. Herbert; "he has lost considerable sums to lord Grimsborough."

The lateness of the hour put an end to further discussion on the subject. O'Leary took his leave, and Murrough had departed without returning to the drawing-room.

CHAPTER XX.

" Cadenus, common forms apart,
In ev'ry scene had kept his heart,
Had sigh'd and languish'd, vow'd and writ,
For pastime, or to show his wit."

ANON.

THE following day I called on Murrough at his lodgings. " Come now, Jack," he exclaimed on my entrance, " let me hear without delay your precious plan for ridding me of the overpowering attentions of my fair Connaught friends—you are to contrive it so as to make *them* cashier *me*, without any overt act of impoliteness upon my part, are you not?"

" Why, Murrough, it 's the easiest thing in the world. You have never committed yourself by any positive declaration of passion."

" Never—I have only looked unutterable things."

"Oh, if you have confined your protestations to the language of glances, all's right! But I wonder that your own astute genius has not anticipated my simple ruse. All you have to do is to write a letter in passion's tenderest language to some imaginary fair one,—some Ethelinde, or Constantia, or Evelina, and the next time you visit the Misses O'Moore drop the epistle, as if accidentally, in their drawing-room, and leave it behind you. Curiosity will induce them to read it, and the rage of jealousy at finding your heart in the possession of a rival, will make them dismiss you instanter."

"Oh!" cried Murrough, "how unpardonably stupid was I, not to anticipate your scheme! Come, here goes."

And he instantly sat down and wrote as follows:—

"MY ADORED EVELINA,

"SINCE our last moonlight meeting, my heart has been constantly the slave of anxious fears, lest my absence should produce the

slightest change in your affections. Not, my love, heaven knows! that I doubt your constancy and faith; but a tender and engrossing love like mine, is subject to a thousand apprehensions that disturb its tranquillity, and from which a less enthusiastic passion is exempt.

"Blame me not, dearest! for giving expression to my little anxieties; I cannot repress them if I would, and I would not if I could! for I have not a wish but that my heart, with all its little foibles and its faults, should be laid wholly open to you! Write to me, my Evelina! write to your adoring Murrough. I shall kiss every word in your letter, and every letter in each word! I shall gaze with rapture on the lines your hand will trace—I shall press them to my lips and to my heart!

"I assure you, dearest! that you needed not conceive one moment's jealousy about the Miss O'Moores. They are a pair of respectable old ladies, no doubt highly estimable; but, goodlack! had you seen them, you scarcely would have thought they were capable of in-

spiring the passion of love! I understand they think of prefixing 'Mrs.' to their names, as being too advanced in life to retain any longer the more youthful designation of 'Miss.' But to think they could warp my affection from you for an instant—Oh, Evelina! Evelina!

"My love, I am sometimes inclined to be melancholy and contemplative. My person has grown spare and attenuated, from the busy workings of the thoughtful mind within. I grow fond of the moon and of solitude, because our lonely meetings in the glen beneath that planet are perpetually present to my recollection. I am now upon the wing for the House of Commons, so have only time to express my ardent longings to clasp you once more to my fond bosom beneath her mellow and romantic ray, and to assure you that I am unalterably your own, own, own,

"MURROUGH O'DRISCOLL.

"P.S.—Direct to me, 'House of Commons, Dublin,' and don't again omit to affix M.P. to

my name, or I shall be charged postage, and your Murrough is broke, horse, foot, and dragoons. And if some one is good, some one shall get a new Lunardi hat with French silk ribbons—eh coaxy?"

"Fal-lal, lal-a-ral, lal-a-ral!" cried Murrough, snapping his fingers and capering about the room; "may be that epistle wo'n't do! Fal-lal, lal-a-ral, lal-lal! Positively *that* would stir up jealousy from the bottom of a well—eh, Jack?"

"Come," said I, "we should lose no time in firing the train."

Murrough directed the letter, "To Miss Evelina O'Shaughnessy," put it in his pocket, and away we went to wait upon Emily and Harriet. Our reception was most gracious. Emily informed us we were come most opportunely to remonstrate with her landlady, who, she said, was making an exorbitant demand for lodgings. Murrough listened to her narrative of grievances with a face expressive of the

deepest interest; but declined interfering with Mrs. Fleming, on the plea that his extreme anxiety to procure cheap lodgings for Miss O'Moore, might induce him to lean too hard upon the landlady, which he feared would subsequently jar against his conscientious feelings. Only for that consideration, he would have been most happy, he assured her, to comply with her request.

"But, Mr. O'Driscoll," said Emily, "I am *so* sorry you were not here ten minutes ago! I would have introduced you to the most delightful man in the whole world!"

"Madam," replied Murrough, assuming an offended expression, "I felicitate you on making such a very delightful acquaintance."

"Oh! don't be jealous, Mr. O'Driscoll, he is only a Frenchman, or a German, or some such thing—he is a nobleman,—Count Klopstockendock, and a highly elegant person, I assure you." Murrough and I stared.

"I'll tell you, gentlemen, how we picked him up," proceeded Emily; "he is quite an

acquisition, I protest! We drove out in the carriage to Kirby, the attorney's, to arrange about my moiety of the Glenrowry estate, and Kirby informed me that three old lives had dropped within the last week, which will give me an addition of £300 per annum. A very elegant, foreign-looking person was sitting in the office, and the instant that Kirby went into the back office, he clapped his hat under his arm, and making me the most finished bow I ever saw in all my life, 'Madam,' said he in broken English, 'I congratulate you.'

"'Sir,' says I, 'I'm much obliged to you, but I don't know who you are—I never saw you before.'

"'That's my misfortune, ma'am,' says he, in most elegant broken language, and with a second bow that beat the first hollow, 'but it's easy to see you are a person of merit and distinction, and as such I can't but take an interest in any good fortune that may happen you, though I haven't the honour of your acquaintance.' And if you were to hear the Frenchified

way that he said it all, Mr. O'Driscoll, I protest you couldn't but have liked him.

"'Sir, says I, curtseying, 'I'm excessively obliged to you; will you do me the honour to tell me to whom I am indebted for this flattering attention?' So he handed me a card that smelt like a perfumer's shop, with 'Le Comte Klopstockendock' on it, and immediately begged permission, in the handsomest manner, to have the honour of visiting us, which you may be sure we readily granted. Well, he handed us into the chaise, and I took the opportunity of consulting him about having it painted and settled up, and he said he would see it all elegantly touched up himself. And off we drove, and weren't three minutes at home when a thundering sasserarah was heard at the hall-door, and the Count walked up stairs, and made a bow that excelled all his former bows, and said, he lost no time in availing himself of our permission to make his *visite*. And oh! such French, and such elegance, and such perfumes, and such bows! I never heard, nor smelt, nor

saw the like. We got quite friendly at once, and when he went away we were as intimate as if we had known him twenty years."

"It's a feather in one's cap, too," said Harriet, "to be so intimate with a nobleman of his distinction—a count—is not that the same as an earl in this country, Mr. O'Driscoll? I do confess I'm very fond of rank."

"This stranger appears to have been very engaging indeed," said Murrough, with an air of pique.

"Come, now, Mr. O'Driscoll, *my pet*," said Emily, in a soothing, fondling tone, and catching his right hand in both hers, while Harriet seized in like manner on his left, "you mustn't be the least bit jealous—no, not one morsel of the black dog will I permit.—Upon my word there's not the least occasion for it!" and they beamed forth most liquefying glances on Murrough, who looked sulky and unappeasable. They increased their endearments, but Murrough still turned the refractory shoulder, and soon afterwards departed. When we had got

into the street—"That additional £300 a-year," said he, "the old girl has got, will be an excellent thing."

"For Count Klopstockendock?" said I.

"No, faith! but for me."

"For you!" I exclaimed; "sure you've shaken them off, haven't you?"

"Not I indeed," answered Murrough; "that little miff was only lovers' quarrels; the additional £300 a-year has thoroughly mollified my heart."

"Then why, in the name of all that is marvellous, did you drop your letter to the imaginary Evelina in their drawing-room?"

"The devil I did!" cried Murrough, starting, and feeling for the letter in his pockets; "nay, Jack, you only say that to frighten me."

"Upon my honour," said I, "you dropped it on the hearth-rug while we were taking our leaves—you pulled it out along with your pocket-handkerchief, I thought, purposely, and it fell on the floor and remained there."

"Nay, in that case I'm bedevilled past re-

demption! Oh, then, plague on your tricks and devices, John Grant! what a cursedly provoking way to be diddled out of six hundred a-year! Why then, John O'Brien Grant, may the curse"——

"Now, Murrough, no profaneness, if you please—pray exhibit your philosophy, and reflect that if you've lost the £600 a-year, you are rid of the firm of Emily and Harriet."

"Death, man! don't talk folly! it isn't every day that £600 a year turns up to a poor ways-and-means man like me! Why it's enough to set a saint mad—Oh! had I known of this extra three hundred a year before I wrote that cursed epistle—But perhaps," he added, suddenly changing his tone, "they mayn't read it—though no—curiosity 's too strong. But suppose we could persuade them it was a forgery of Count Klopstockendock's? That would be the grandest ruse that ever was achieved—though, in sober truth, I don't see how we could manage that, neither. Oh! Jack! Jack!

your d——d ingenuity has ruined me. Curse on all sham love-letters, and all fools who write them!"

"And who are so awkward," added I, "as to drop them out of their pockets when they don't intend it."

"Well, at all events," said Murrough, "you must call on them to-morrow, and see how the land lies."

And the following day I called at their lodgings, and was ushered up stairs by Jerry, whose proficiency in the duties of footman, had barely extended to the opening of doors. The drawing-room door was defended by a large Indian screen that completely cut it off from the rest of the apartment; Jerry stooped in the door-way to arrange some inequality in the carpet, and completely obstructed my entrance; the ladies were engaged in such animated conversation as completely to withdraw their attention from any noise I might have made, so that I could not help hearing the fol-

lowing invective, of which it was easy to perceive that Murrough formed the subject.

"The sly, deceitful fellow!" exclaimed Emily, "after all the generosity and hospitality we shewed him, and all our——Oh, the deceiving wretch! I can't think of it with common patience—the horrid, sordid, odious wretch!"

"Grand ciel!" exclaimed a French voice, in accents of horror.

"Oh, my Lord Count," added Harriet, "you don't know the half of it! Had you seen all his glances, and his squeezes, and his sighs, and his everything, you'd have taken your oath he'd have married us."

"Every body said he was dying for love of us," said Emily. "Oh! the wretch!"

"Grand ciel!" again ejaculated Count Klopstockendock, "quel trahison! I schwear it is past all belief! Oh! que c'est horrible! effroyable, dis treachery! I can forgive any ting at all but dis treachery, mais cela me choque! me tue! I do not tink dere is no monstre worse dan de

man who can deceive one beautiful and trusting woman. Diantre! I vould slay him sur le champ! Vat shall I do, miladi de Moore, to dis méchant, dis coquin, dis scélerât? Vill I kill him for you? vill I shweep him from de face of de earth?"

I had now advanced to the centre of the room, Jerry having at length concluded his operations at the door, and made way for my progress, but the attention of the trio, who sat with their faces to the fire, was so wholly engrossed with Murrough's delinquency, that they were not in the slightest degree aware of my presence. The Count sat in the middle, and tenderly held a hand of each sister.

"I could not have forgave de fripon," he added, "if he had been false to the ugliest woman dat live! but oh! juste ciel! to play such dam trick on two such *anges!* two such charmantes lady! si belles! si distinguées! si aimables! Ma foi! it do make my blood curdle up in my body! Ma foi, if he stand before me

dere, I stick him trough de heart! Chéres demoiselles, is it your plaisir dat I sweep him from de earth?"

"Ah, my dear Count, perhaps you might fall in the encounter."

"Fall in the rencontre! and could I ask de nobler death? Je serois couvert de gloire! Mesdemoiselles! if a chevalier can fall in defence of de beauté, de jeunesse, and tout ce qu'il y a d'aimable, he need not wish for to live anoder hour. Mais n'ayez pas peur, mes anges! I am tout-a-fait parfait at eider sword or pistolet—I stick le Duc de Boisson trough de troat—Ahi! you vould laugh to see it! he vas fat, gros homme.—Den le Comte Hyppolite Chariée—littel, littel fellow! ma foi, he vas not four feet of high! I stick him trough de body—Ahi! hi! hi! He vas run trough and trough, and he look—hi! hi! hi! he look like de becassin—vat you call de snipe, on de spit —hi! hi! hi!"

There was a pause, and I presented myself.

"Miss O'Moore," said I, "I have done

myself the honour of waiting on you; I must confess I have been a few moments in the room unperceived by you, but Monsieur le Comte was engaged in so interesting a recital of his feelings and adventures that I could not interrupt him."

"Why then, plague upon Jerry!" exclaimed Emily, "I can never teach the stupid ignoramus to announce people! He opens the door and lets them walk in as if they were dogs! Sir, your friend Mr. O'Driscoll has treated us in a most scandalous manner,—our excellent friend, Count Klopstockendock, just entered the room as Harriet and I were discussing the affair, and we told him everything, and he is quite of our opinion."

The Count took snuff, and assumed the impartial deliberative air of a judge.

"May I ask, madam," said I, "in what respect my friend has been so unfortunate as to offend you?"

"Treachery, Sir, treachery!—He has pretended to pay his attentions to Harriet and

me, and it seems all the while he was making fierce love to another person, as this letter will inform you; the letter is addressed to a Miss Evelina O'Shaughnessy; read it, Sir, read it, it will let you into as pretty a piece of deception as was ever played off upon two innocent and unsuspecting young women."

I perused the epistle with as grave a countenance as the nature of the case permitted. "Pray, Miss O'Moore," said I, when I had read it, "may I ask how this letter came into your possession?"

Emily looked confused, and hesitated, but Harriet quickly answered—

"He dropped it on the hearth-rug, and we found it after he went."

"It is not usual, Miss O'Moore, to read letters addressed to other persons."

"Ma foi!" cried the Count, laying his hand on the hilt of his sword; "dere is noting dese demoiselles has done, dat I vil not defend vid my life!"

"Besides which," continued I, unheeding

the valorous declaration of Klopstockendock, "I should think your feelings would be considerably altered, if you found, on investigation, that Mr. O'Driscoll had not written the letter at all."

"Ay, how is that?" exclaimed both sisters at once, with an evident wish to find Murrough acquitted, which alarmed the Count not a little.

"It 's the easiest thing in the world," said I, "to prove that this letter is a forgery."

"How, how, how?" exclaimed both sisters eagerly.

"Now, Miss O'Moore, let me ask, would you, or would any reasonable person, write a letter to an imaginary, a fictitious being—a being, in short, who hadn't any existence at all?"

"Certainly not," replied Emily.

"Well, then," said I, "I'll stake my life there neither is, nor ever was, such a person as this Evelina O'Shaughnessy. It 's a gross, an atrocious forgery! There is no such person,

I repeat! It is utterly impossible that there can be such a person; for, long and intimately as I have known Mr. Murrough O'Driscoll, I have never even heard him mention the name; I have long enjoyed his confidence, and I pledge you my most sacred honour, that if any such person existed among his acquaintance, the circumstance could not be unknown to me. You do not now suppose it possible, Miss O'Moore, that Mr. O'Driscoll, for the barren and unprofitable pleasure of writing an impertinent letter, would address it to the winds, as I may say; to a nonentity—to a lady who does not exist on the face of the earth—in short, an imaginary being?"

"Why, I think it impossible that anybody would," said Harriet.

"So, I think we may fairly pronounce the epistle a forgery," said I.

"On my word, it looks like it," said Harriet, "eh, Emily?"

"Why, sister, I protest I don't know what to think."

" Miss O'Moore, I appeal to your good sense and your knowledge of the human heart. I am satisfied to rest my friend's exculpation on one of two points: either show me a conceivable reason why he should address such a letter to an imaginary, non-existent being, or else prove to me that this Miss Evelina O'Shaughnessy exists at all. For my own part, I pledge myself there never was any such person."

" Why—I believe—Mr. O'Brien Grant—we must admit your friend's innocence—but yet I don't know! What on earth brought the letter on my hearth-rug just after he quitted the room?"

" And now, Miss O'Moore, let me ask you in the name of common sense, if you really suppose that Mr. O'Driscoll (desirous, no doubt, to preserve unabated the friendship with which you have honoured him) would leave such an epistle as that in your house, even supposing for a moment he had written it? The idea inevitably assumes my friend to be

a fool; and I think you will admit he is any thing but that."

"But what on earth else could have brought the letter there?"

"Ah, Miss O'Moore, there are more things in the world than are dreamt of in either your philosophy or mine. There is such a thing as sleight of hand—Now this is, on the face of it some rascally legerdemain trick—I've seen Breslaw the conjuror whisk a card through a three-inch deal-plank, and extract a dozen rabbits from a hen's egg—and no doubt there are numerous persons who have motives enough for wishing to produce a breach between you and Mr. O'Driscoll. You are a person, permit me to say, of too much consequence and fortune to expect that the world can be indifferent about your proceedings; and such persons are most frequently the victims of deeply laid conspiracies."

A smile plainly showed that the compliment had done its part, and I continued in the tone

propitiatory, "I have shown you that your poor friend Murrough had no conceivable motive for writing such a very foolish letter,—that there is not on the face of the earth such a person as the fair Evelina to whom it is addressed,—that Murrough, who has ever regarded you both with the most profound and unaffected respect (not to speak of any warmer feeling) could scarcely be supposed so insane as to forfeit your invaluable friendship by a wanton and unmeaning affront. The notion is quite too absurdly ridiculous to be entertained for an instant. The whole thing is evidently a conspiracy against Mr. O'Driscoll and yourselves. In fact, I see that you are as fully convinced of his innocence as I am—I expected no less from your penetration and good sense; and I have only to beg one favour—no—I will not call it favour, but justice, for my friend."

"What is that?" eagerly demanded the demoiselles O'Moore.

"Simply that you will permit poor, injured, calumniated Murrough to visit you and plead his own cause to-morrow?"

"Oh, to be sure, to be sure!" exclaimed both ladies; the poor fellow shall have every justice at our hands."

"I tremble to think," said I, "of what his feelings may be, when he learns the accusation that has been brought against him—I hope it may not produce a prejudicial effect on his health."

"The poor fellow!" ejaculated Emily tenderly; "and is it possible his health could suffer? Nay, in that case perhaps you had better say nothing at all about it; I should never forgive myself if he suffered in the slightest degree."

"Judging from the usual warmth of his temperament," said I, "I should think he would be miserably sensitive where the heart was at all concerned."

"Oh, poor dear fellow—we must take care of that," said Harriet tenderly.

"I am certain, Miss O'Moore, that if he could discover the author of this infamous letter, he would prosecute him for forgery."

"Poor fellow! poor dear fellow! we won't plague him about it—he has the business of the nation on his shoulders now, and we must not torment him." But mind, O'Brien Grant—you must make him come visit us to-morrow—Harriet and I shall expect him and will take no excuses."

Count Klopstockendock seemed as much disconcerted as a Frenchman could be, at the favourable verdict of the ladies. I sat with them more than an hour, awaiting the valiant Count's departure, but in vain: he seemed determined to outsit me; for when I rose in the evening to attend the House of Commons, he still retained firm possession of his post.

Arrived at the House, I met Murrough, who eagerly demanded the result of my visit to the Misses O'Moore; and great was his exultation on finding that I had succeeded in establishing his innocence.

"But I don't like to see that the French-German Count is such a favourite—you should not have suffered him to outsit you, if the thing could at all be helped, but I suppose it couldn't. Well, to-morrow I make my devoirs once more to the sisters—Courage! mon ami! it seems we are not to say any thing of the sham love-letter; (*your* precious device, Jack;) and as for every thing else, I promise you I shall prove supereminently, superexquisitely, supernaturally bewitching—I shall exemplify my favourite motto, that

> 'The man who hath a tongue, I say is no man,
> If with his tongue he cannot win a woman.'"

"Why, winning a woman is not much to boast of," said I; "but winning a woman with six hundred a year; there's the achievement for a lad of mettle."

"Grant, we're asked to a soirée to night."

"Who asked us?"

"You would scarcely believe me if I told you--Lord Kilmoyle. I was introduced to him

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to-day by Mr. Herbert, and was agreeably surprised to find not the slightest tinge of the Cherokee in his manner. It seems, he is an intimate acquaintance of Mr. Herbert's, and as soon as he learned that you were the old gentleman's grandson, his lordship expressed a polite desire that you and he should become known to each other, and regretted that the want of time prevented his waiting upon either of *our firm* before this soirée, which, I understand, is to be a fanciful mélange of character and conversazione. Will you come?"

"Certainly," said I.

"We shall meet, then, at the marquis of Corrin's house, in Henrietta Street, at ten o'clock."

CHAPTER XXI.

The circle deepens ; beam'd from gaudy robes,
Tapers, and sparkling gems, and radiant eyes,
A soft effulgence o'er the palace waves ;
While, a gay insect in his summer shine,
The fop, light fluttering, spreads his mealy wings.

Ten o'clock found me at lord Corrin's. My carriage could scarcely make its way through the multitude of equipages with which the street was crowded. When I entered the house, lord Kilmoyle (the marquis of Corrin's eldest son) chanced to make his appearance from one of the lower suite of reception rooms, and welcomed me with a cordial politeness that struck me as being truly amiable, when I recollected the very unceremonious manner in which I had dealt with his lordship's oratorical powers at the Galway election. He probably

guessed what was passing in my mind, for he said with a laugh—

"I believe some of my friends displayed pugnacious propensities at Galway, which your prudence prevented from produing any unfortunate results. I assure you, Mr. Grant, I derived much amusement from your humorous satire upon that occasion, although its edge was slightly directed against myself. But elections are privileged periods—in a stormy political contest we can't all weigh our words."

"I assure you, my Lord, it would give me much greater pleasure to be associated with your lordship in any political contest, than to be under the necessity of opposing you."

"You do me much honour, Mr. Grant, but a gulph divides us; you are an assertor of Grattan's popular principles, of which early prepossession, or it may be, family prejudice, compels me to disapprove. But political differences never enter this saloon—they are all forgotten *here* in social harmony."

We now reached the saloon, and Lord Kil-

moyle presented me to his mother, the marchioness of Corrin; a lady in whom Time had not yet effaced the remains of the exquisite loveliness which had distinguished her earlier youth.

"We are soon to have a fancy ball, Mr. Grant," said her ladyship, "to which this is a kind of rambling preliminary; for I told all my friends who mean to appear in character, that this evening would afford them an admirable opportunity for rehearsal. I believe there are one or two nuns, and a zephyr, or some such thing, but I have not yet seen anything piquant."

"Is not Curran to be here this evening?" asked lady Frances Brabazon.

"He was asked by Kilmoyle," replied lady Corrin, "but he only gave a conditional promise. He enlivens lady Ely's theatricals to-night, I imagine; pity he does not look in here more frequently."

"Pray, Mr. Grant," asked lady Frances, "who is that very red-haired gentleman, whose

conversation seems to have so completely entranced the attention of lady Henrietta Burgh, that she quite forgets the game of chess at which they are engaged?"

I followed the eyes of the fair querist, and beheld Murrough, who was conversing, evidently in the very highest spirits, with lady Henrietta, whose involuntary smiles evinced the entertainment she derived from his sallies.

"That, madam, is Mr. O'Driscoll, the member for Galway."

"Ah! I am so glad I asked you; for one has heard so much of him, one really feels anxious to see him. I assure you, his very name is considered quite terrific."

"Oh fie, Frances!" interrupted lady Corrin, "you must know that Mr. Grant is his intimate friend."

"So much the better," replied the lively lady, "for if the wild Galwegian should attempt any thing ferocious, we may look to Mr. Grant for protection."

"I never heard Mr. O'Driscoll accused of ferocity," said lady Corrin, laughing; but even if he were, lady Henrietta seems to have thoroughly civilized him: she certainly does not appear to think him very formidable."

At this instant, an ancient dame, fantastically dressed and highly painted, entered from another apartment.

"I suppose," said I, with rustic naïveté, "that is one of the characters in rehearsal for the fancy ball."

"No—that is lady Kilgarriff in her usual character of age affecting youth, into which she has been seduced by the mischievous counsels of a certain French Count (who is a shocking nuisance, by the way). She has a sister much younger than herself, and a very lovely niece, whose story is extremely romantic.—And O! Mr. Grant, as you and your friend, Mr. O'Driscoll, are adventurous personages, you have now as fine an opportunity of distinguishing yourselves by the rescue of an

imprisoned princess, as ever had heroes of romance. I must tell you the whole story."

I listened with much interest, but just at this moment lord Charlemont approached, and engaged in conversation with our hostess. She soon rose, and taking his arm, proceeded to another apartment, accompanied by lady Frances.

I was thus left alone, and immediately rose to stroll through the rooms, which were really superb. The suite consisted of five apartments, connected with each other by folding-doors. These rooms were fitted up in somewhat of the French style of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth; less gorgeous, of course, in point of decoration, and possibly more tasteful. The walls of the saloon were hung with crimson silk, which formed a striking and effective contrast with the snowy, the translucid purity and whiteness of a range of Parian marble statues, representing mythological subjects, which occupied their pedestals between the

windows. The pannels of the walls and ceiling were bordered with delicately branching arabesques of paly gold; and the wavy, lustrous folds of the rich damask curtains, were pendent from the beaks of eagles that surmounted the ornamented architraves. Fauteuils and ottomans of antique form, and cushioned with embossed crimson velvet, luxuriously invited to repose. The carpets exhibited the richest forms and hues of oriental flowers: and the strong glare of light was avoided, and a softened, dreamy effulgence diffused over the entire scene, by the elegant novelty of moon-lamps, as they were then called, which had just appeared in the saloons of fashion. The extent of the superb apartments, and the numbers of the brilliant crowd, were indefinitely multiplied by numerous large mirrors.

The gay and courtly throng imparted life and animation to the scene; the grave courtier and the stern patriot; the youthful scion of noblesse, just launched on the ensnaring gaieties and blandishments of life; the lively,

playful belle—the lovely prude of aristocracy—the sombre chaperone—the aged matron—the faded beauty, vainly essaying to preserve the charms of other years; all, all were *fused* into that social harmony of refined, delightful intercourse which *once* invested the society of Dublin with a matchless charm, heightened by the captivating influence of Irish hilarity and Irish wit; and which has fled our deserted metropolis—must I say *for ever?*

As I gazed on the brilliant scene before me, strains of the softest melody stole upon my ear from a distant apartment. The groupes that had been busily conversing were suddenly silent; for the sweet, slow notes entranced the attention of all. The air—O! how faithfully the memory of each tone is engraven on my soul!—the air was the beautiful slow movement in the overture to Artaxerxes, exquisitely played upon French horns and hautbois. I think the soft wail of a flute or two mingled in that enchanting passage where the notes ascend to a repetition of the melody upon the

upper octave. The plaintive, melancholy swell of the French horns, was peculiarly adapted to give the finest effect to this passage; the performers concluded without playing the gavotte, when a unanimous encore involuntarily broke from the company. The exquisite strains were repeated; again swelled upon the horns; and again died away in a soft and solemn cadence.

"This is fairy music," said lord Charlemont, with a sigh, "and reminds me of strains I have heard in other days in the Chiesa di San Luca at Rome. Will your ladyship allow me to ask for a favourite air?"

Lady Corrin replied with a gracious inclination of the head, and his lordship immediately selected the VOLUNTEERS' MARCH.

Plain and simple as this melody may be, it possessed an indescribable charm from the glorious associations with which it was connected. On the present occasion it had every advantage that could be derived from the most tasteful and scientific performance; and the proud blood mantled to the face of the venera-

ble General of the Irish volunteers, and a tear of intensely patriotic feeling actually trembled in his eye, as the martial air recalled to his mind the noble constitutional achievements to which it had so often led him forth. Indeed, a similar feeling appeared, though in a less degree, to pervade the aristocratic assemblage; they had still a sense of nationality; corruption had not *then* done its worst; the final blow had not yet been struck, and the irresistible sympathies of home, of friends, of residence, of country, had still some necessary influence on persons whose connexion with their native land had not finally been severed by total, universal absenteeism.

It is with feelings of deep pain that I recall these scenes of bygone mirth and splendour. Last month* I chanced to revisit the metropolis, and the mournful memory of my youthful occupations and associates, impelled me to visit the quondam town mansion of the

* July, 1834.

Marquis of Corrin. There were bills upon the windows announcing that the house was for sale; it had been in the market for some years and found no purchaser. The door was opened by a woman, who, with her daughter, inhabited a corner of the mansion, for the purpose of admitting such visitors as might come to inspect the premises with a view to purchase.

The shutters were all closed—many of the doors were despoiled of locks and bolts. I left the cheerless hall, ascended the magnificent staircase, and entered the ante-room, which opened on the suite I have already described. It was more than forty years since I had beheld that suite thronged with rank, and loveliness, and fashion. The old woman who attended me, opened the windows, and admitted the light of day into the empty apartments.—Great heaven! how changed from the period to which my recollection extended! Not an article of furniture was visible—all had been sold off by auction many years before; the rooms were totally, literally empty. The gor-

geous decorations were gone; bare, desolate walls met the eye on every side.

I stood on the spot where the venerable Charlemont had stood; the scenes of other days crowded thick upon my mind; I remembered the brilliant, animated groupes, many of whom were long since numbered with the dead, while others had transferred their affections and their residence to another land; and others again had sunk into retirement to brood over the fallen fortunes of their country. As these thoughts filled my mind, the scenes of youth arose, as in a magic glass, before me. Fancy, Memory, were busy—the slow, rich melody of distant years seemed to steal with all its former power on my soul; its tones were in perfect unison with the mournful tenor of my thoughts, and the languid and delicious swell of the French horns once more swept through the lofty room, when an involuntary sigh dispelled the brief illusion, and recalled me to the sad, blank realities of emptiness, desertion, and decay. Such a scene must, in

any case, excite solemn feelings; but in this case, the emotions of melancholy are increased when we reflect that the scene itself is a pregnant epitome of the history of Ireland. But whither am I wandering? I have strayed far a-field from the thread of my narrative. To return:—

When the hour of midnight arrived, dancing commenced, and was opened by lady Corrin and Sir Henry Hartstonge. In the course of the night, a minuet-de-la-cour was admirably danced by Murrough and his partner at chess, lady Henrietta Burgh.

"Well, really," said lady Frances Brabazon, "your friend has quite eclipsed all rivals in his execution of the minuet—I scarcely think he can have learned in Connemara—I never saw any thing so graceful! he sails through the room like a swan!"

And I scarcely could suppress a smile at Murrough's exquisitely graceful movements; I could not imagine how the more than hexameter demagogue, the bluff, obstreperous, blus-

tering mob-leader, had imparted to his huge, brawny form the swan-like grace with which he seemed to swim, rather than walk, through the minuet. And the long, red, curly tresses floated negligently round his physiognomy! and the little eyes sent forth their incomparably killing and seductive glances, no doubt, with terrible effect. Lady Henrietta seemed enchained, pretty much as one may suppose that a princess of romance might be, who had secured the escort of a tame lion, and felt proud of walking in familiar companionship with his shaggy majesty, in order to show that her charms were able to tame down the king of the wild tribes, although the reputed ferocity of the royal beast was sufficiently terrific to scare away all other mortals.

When Lady Corrin retired to a seat, she chanced to see me near her; her bouquet, at the same time fell, and I flew to pick it up.

"I shall reward you for that service," said her ladyship, "by taking pity on your curiosity; for I am certain you are dying to know the

story of the imprisoned princess I was going to tell you a while ago. But first—will you venture on her liberation?"

"Indeed, madam, I don't yet know; are there any enchanted dragons or giants, to defend her prison?"

"For shame! you should show yourself regardless of danger in such a case. There are neither dragons nor giants, although there may be human obstacles equally formidable. Lady Kilgarriff's brother-in-law, Mr. Barrington M'Neile, has thought proper, from some strange, unaccountable whim, to immure his lady, and his lovely niece, in strict confinement in the old house at Barrington Park, in the county Tipperary. No person can discover what led him to take this strange step; it is more than a year since the ladies' imprisonment commenced, and it is only now it has transpired. Miss M'Neile will have a splendid fortune, of which her uncle cannot possibly deprive her, which doubtless the lady will bestow, along with her hand, upon the gallant knight who succeeds in ef-

fecting her rescue, according to the invariable practice of liberated heroines *. What say you, Mr. Grant, to the adventure?"

"It seems inviting enough, as your ladyship has described it; and yet, I think I shall leave it to the valour of some other knight."

"What! I had really thought you were more enterprising; a thousand cavaliers would seize with avidity such a promising occasion of showing their dexterity and valour."

"Is miss M'Neile possessed of the requisite attributes of a heroine? is she interesting and pretty?"

"Interesting! an imprisoned princess interesting! Why, all such persons are interesting

* The Irish reader will remember Lady Belvedere's imprisonment by Lord B.'s authority, at Gaulston Park. The first month of her confinement there, his Lordship sent her a new carriage and handsome horses, in order, it would seem, to gild her imprisonment with the mockery of an equipage. She ordered her servants to drive her to the next village; but they refused to exceed the limits of the park, alleging Lord B.'s commands; on which she sent her husband back the equipage, saying that her feet were sufficient for the limits to which she was restricted.

by prescription. And as to beauty—I believe you have seen her, Sir Henry ?"

" Yes," replied Sir Henry Hartstonge, and I really cannot say,—tastes differ so much. Perhaps she was spoiled by being too maniêrée, and I think she had too much confidence, and a little affectation. She spent two or three winters in Paris, chaperoned by Lady E * *; and her ladyship introduced her every where as a phœnix, and made her perform in her private theatricals. Now that is bad training, you know, for a giddy girl."

" I am surprised, however, that there can be a second opinion regarding her beauty;" said lady Corrin. " I know I thought her lovely; and when lord Corrin first saw her, he spoke of nothing else for a week. But you must not blame her for taking part in lady E * * 's theatrical frolics; for all who come within the sphere of her ladyship's influence must ' rave, recite, and madden.' For my part, I most sincerely pity the poor thing; what a sad change, from the gay coteries of Paris, to

the imprisonment of an old desolate mansion-house, among the Tipperary mountains!"

"She is not perfectly alone," observed Sir Henry; "she shares her confinement with her aunt."

"Perhaps she would prefer total solitude to that," said a lady who had been hitherto silent.

"O, no, no, no!" exclaimed lady Corrin, earnestly; "don't say so! Mrs. M'Neile is an extremely amiable woman, and has been uniformly kind to Clara."

"It is a horrid, arbitrary proceeding," remarked the other lady.

"I think," said I, "the law should step in, and effect their liberation."

"Because *you* do not wish to undertake the task," said lady Corrin, smiling; "but in any form it is a service of danger, for Barrington M'Neile has sworn, I understand, to consider the smallest interference on any one's part as a personal insult, and to shoot the officious intruder through the head."

"A formidable risk," observed Sir Henry.

"But poor, poor Clara!" continued lady Corrin, in a sympathising tone, "shut out from the gaieties in which she had indulged with so much pleasure, and condemned to the stiff, dark, dismal old yew-trees and rookeries at Barrington Park."

"I don't quite partake your ladyship's feelings of commiseration," said Sir Henry; "perhaps this unpleasant seclusion may preserve her from dangers similar to that which she so narrowly escaped in one of Lady E * * 's theatrical exhibitions in Paris."

"Ah, do let us hear all about that," cried lady Frances Brabazon, who happened to catch the last words as she passed; "I know you are speaking of Clara M'Neile—nay, you cannot deny it—*Do*, pray, tell me to what dangers lady E * * 's Parisian theatricals exposed her."

"You shall hear all, lady Frances. There was some foolish drama composed by lady E * *, in which Clara was to perform the heroine, who, of course, was persecuted with

the addresses of two or three rival admirers, of whom the favoured swain was the Duc de Baudreville, or Baudricourt, or something of that sort. Well, it seems that the heroine was under the espionage of two strict guardians, who strongly disapproved of this Baudricourt's pretensions, as they considered him a dissipated spendthrift who had wasted all his money. But Baudricourt had, we must suppose, *la beauté du diable*, and contrived to make himself so irresistibly bewitching, that the heroine agrees, in a billet which she finds means of conveying to him, to admit him to a private interview in her boudoir. All the avenues to her dwelling are so rigidly guarded, that ordinary mortals could never discover any mode of access to her bower. But whither will not Love, assisted by inventive genius, penetrate? Baudricourt, despising all obstacles, contrives to make a descent on her premises through the chimney. We are not told by what process he avoids contracting soot in this descent; he emerges from the fire-place with

inimitable grace, surrounded with an atmosphere of oriental perfumes, that seems to have descended the chimney along with him. He makes a superb bow, lays his hand on his heart, and falls at her feet—she bids him rise—he pleads his passion with such convincing eloquence that at last she consents to an elopement. But how to evaporate? The window is grated—the door is locked outside and guarded by trusty domestics. In short, no mode of egress appears practicable, unless she consents to elope through the chimney. Now, it happened that one night when this whimsical scene was represented at lady E * * 's hotel in the Rue Montmartre, the part of the duc de Baudricourt was enacted by the adventurous count Klopstockendock."——

"Nonsense!" exclaimed lady Corrin—"what an exquisite *scena*."—

"And the count," resumed Sir Henry, "being perfectly aware that Clara was entitled to a noble fortune, (or at all events what a Frenchman would consider as such,) skipped

down the chimney with an extravagant exaggeration of grace in every attitude, flung himself upon his knees before the heroine, added various extemporaneous protestations to those which the drama enjoined, pressed her fingers in rapture to his lips, proposed an elopement through the flue, (which Toler calls a *sweeping* proposal,) and escorted her up the chimney with infinite gallantry. The instant poor Clara arrived behind the scenes, she found herself suddenly enveloped in a large net which was instantly drawn tight, and whirled off with its lovely contents, on the shoulders of two stout valets-de-place, to a carriage which the count had in waiting. Clara shrieked and screamed, although there are mischievous persons who assert that her shrieks and screams were strangely inaudible, and moreover that the net was a device in which she had herself participated in order to escape suspicion of being a willing party to the transaction. However this may be, Lord E * * met the net on its way to the count's carriage. He

eyed it rather suspiciously, and asked Klopstockendock what he had got there.

"'Ah, marquis!' cried the count, 'vat I ave got dere? ma foi, I have got some old clothes in de net—I go to perform de rôle of a Juif—dese are my commodity.'

"'Very humorous indeed, count,' said lord E**, 'but I shall first take the liberty of requesting your commodity to walk up stairs with me.'

"At these words the fair tenant of the net is said to have loudly screamed for extrication from her prison, although she had been hitherto perfectly silent.

"'Aha! ahi!' cried the count, 'den dis is de way I ave always been fool by dese women! Bon! I vil ave my revenges on some of dem yet!'

"I understand it was immediately on lord E**'s return to Ireland that Clara was committed to her uncle's care, and sent with her aunt to rusticate at Barrington Park. I pity

her, certainly, for M'Neile is extremely imperious and tyranical."

"Klopstockendock is not here this evening," observed lady Frances.

"No, he was not asked—Do you know I have begun to suspect that he is an impostor?"

"Indeed! how is it possible, in that case, he can have found his way into society here or in Paris?"

"He has been admitted into Irish society on the faith of having been seen at lady E**'s in Paris; and he found admittance there, I much suspect, by affecting a theatrical mania. Lady E** says she saw him at the British ambassador's, at Vienna; but at all events there is an unpleasant mystery connected with him."

Lady Corrin and lady Frances now rose, attracted by some persons who entered, dressed in character; they were joined by lord Carlow and Murrough, and Sir Henry and I reverted to the fair prisoner of Barrington Park.

"I fear," said he, "that M'Neile will treat

her with great harshness; he has done the strangest things, and his passions are at times ungovernable. One day, he informed his wife that lord W******** had called, and awaited her in the drawing-room. Thither she repaired, and instead of the expected visitor, she found an ancient and venerable goat, which M'Neile had previously brought there. She felt the insult, but could not avoid smiling at the whimsical way in which his malice displayed itself. The room had been recently furnished with several handsome mirrors, for which M'Neile had paid an immense price. The goat, perceiving his form reflected in one of them, immediately felt his pugnacious emotions arise—he advanced to the mirror—the other goat advanced to meet him—he butted fiercely at him—the other goat followed his example, until the mirror gave way in the contest and flew in fifty shivers about the room. Mrs. M'Neile was fully avenged; she repaired to her husband, and informed him that she had just had a delightful interview with lord

W********, who now desired a few minutes' conversation with *him*. M'Neile accordingly went to the drawing-room, where he found one of his expensive mirrors in pieces on the floor, and the goat ferociously butting away at another. His rage was uncontrollable; but Mrs. M'Neile, who knew from experience the lengths into which exasperation often hurried him, wisely provided for her safety by locking herself up in her room until his passion should subside." *

"But tell me, Sir Henry, do you really believe that strange story of Clara's attempted elopement in the net?"

"I can't say that I either believe or disbelieve it; it may be invention, perhaps, but very many persons have repeated it."

"But to think that any girl could admire Klopstockendock! he strikes me to be the beau ideal of an elderly French dancing master."

"O, girls will admire any thing or any body

* This story is told of a celebrated original, long a member of Daly's Club.

when caprice is ascendant; besides, Clara is a whimsical being at all times. And she does such extraordinary things! she once took it into her head to find out whether General O'Callaghan's queue was false or real, and in order to make this valuable discovery, she got precisely such another queue from a perruquier; two or three nights afterwards, she had an opportunity of ascertaining, for she sat next the General at supper, and twitching his queue smartly, she immediately threw the other queue on the table before him. As his own queue was really false, he imagined she had pulled it off, and he looked exceedingly foolish. Now I think a giddy, wild girl, who would do such a thing, would almost do any thing. But pray look yonder! what is that singular group, who are dancing in the other room? Do look, pray!"

And we rose, and gazed on a strange quartet of dancers, who were dressed in the characters they intended to assume at lady Corrin's fancy ball. There was Thomas à Becket, in full

pontificals—Saint Patrick, with stiff ecclesiastical robes, and a bag of reptiles in his hand; the saint and the martyr elaborately footed away at each other, occasionally setting to Harlequin and Martin Luther. The English prelate evinced great skill in his execution of the Irish jig steps; and the sturdy Reformer occasionally broke off from the regular figure into a wild, fantastic voluntary, and displayed unrivalled agility and grace in his eccentric pirouettes and caprioles.

"You must appear in some character at my fancy ball," said lady Corrin.

"In what character would your ladyship recommend me to appear?"

"Nay, that I leave to your own selection; but pray let it be something piquant and novel."

"Curran went last week to a masquerade in the character of Mount Vesuvius; he managed the volcanic eruption extremely well with a gunpowder devil on his head."

"O, pray come in some more pacific form—

I dread explosions and eruptions—come in the character of an emancipated papist—I am sure you would do it every justice."

"Nay, lady Corrin, the appearance of such a personage here would make a much greater explosion than a pasteboard Mount Vesuvius."

"Well, well—come as Jew, Turk, Infidel, or papist, or any thing you please; I confess I am anxious to see you in character, for I have heard your imitative talents are first rate."

I bowed, and promised to comply. The night wore late, and shortly afterwards I departed.

CHAPTER XXII.

" Life's chequered scenes of light and shade
But represent a Masquerade.
In various forms mankind parade
Like masquers at a Masquerade ;
Life's but a scene of light and shade,
And the whole world 's a Masquerade."

EDMESTON.

IMMEDIATELY after breakfast on the following morning, I repaired to Murrough's lodgings to accompany him on his pacificatory visit to the Misses O'Moore. We proceeded to Grafton Street, and knocked twice at the door before it was opened. " Now," said he, " you shall see how the soft, seductive blandishments of voice, and glance, and manner, can subdue the female heart; watch my tones to day — you may improve by the lesson—observe the soul-

melting tenderness, the slightly faltering cadence of my modulations—Oh! Jack, my accents will drop manna—the air I breathe will be a very atmosphere of love! Pray how do I look?"

"Not very like a Corydon, I think—those fiery tresses and that little cocked hat give you an extremely *game* look—you look—let me see—like a sleight-of-hand man, like a knowing old conjuror—a fellow who would say 'Whiff! puff! presto! gone!' I wish you could divest your countenance of that inveterately hocus-pocus expression."

As we spoke, a servant appeared, but it was not our Galwegian friend, Jerry. "Is Miss O'Moore at home?" demanded Murrough.

"No, sir."

"Is Miss Harriet O'Moore at home?" "No, sir."

"Indeed! then they must have gone out unusually early. Do you know in what direction they have gone?" "No, sir."

"Then perhaps you can tell me how soon they will return?"

"They won't come back at all, sir."

"Won't come back! why, have they left these lodgings?"

"Yes, sir; they drove off at six this morning, in Miss O'Moore's carriage, with the French gentleman, who was here all yesterday and all last night."

"What? with Count Klopstockendock?"

"Yes—I believe that is his name, sir."

"Wheugh!" exclaimed Murrough, turning to me; "the count has been early in the field—he has fairly sacked the premises and carried off the booty. The poaching old French vagabond! And pray, my good girl," he added, addressing the servant, "did you see them driving off together?"

"I did, Sir—the ouldest miss was crying, and had her arm round the count's neck, and the other miss was laughing, and saying it was all fine fun; and as for the Frenchman, he

was busy squeezing both their hands and making crying grimaces at one, and laughing grimaces at t'other.—Indeed, Sir, I thought it was a pity he hadn't a horse-collar to grin through, for his face was just like a monkey cracking nuts in his teeth."

"Oho!" muttered Murrough, extremely provoked, although he could not help laughing at Klopstockendock's address; "the grimacing old rascal has carried the fortress by storm! But it seems he has eloped with both—I dare say the demoiselles were wrangling which should be bride, and which bridesmaid—and between all parties I am diddled out of my six hundred a year. Ullagone! (as my ancestor Uraoiceigheith O'Driscoll would have said in such a case.) I feel strangely tempted to pursue the count and break his bones; but I suppose one might as well pursue the last year's snow! *Abiit, evasit, erupit*—at any rate, it is well that my softer feelings were not very deeply engaged, for the shock would have then, I suppose, been truly awful. A pretty

piece of legerdemain to juggle my sweethearts away from under my nose! Now, Jack, in sober sadness, have I not some reason to be vexed?"

I preached consolation to the wounded feelings of the poor deserted lover, and succeeded so well, that in a quarter of an hour he had nearly recovered his wonted equanimity. I left him then to philosophise upon the shifting and uncertain scenes of human life, and returned to Stephen's Green, where several letters from the country awaited me. Some of them were from Kilshindy, complaining bitterly of the merciless persecution with which Clarkson, the defeated candidate, was daily visiting the electors who had voted for me, several of whom were his tenants. Other epistles were from certain members of my committee, informing me that I need not expect them to keep the engagements they had made at the time of my election, to reimburse me by subscription for my outlay upon that occasion. The advice which this part of

my experience enables me to give all candidates for parliamentary honours, is, that if they have money which they desire to throw away—well and good—let them do so. But if they advance a sum to attain their object on the faith of pledges from "Committees" (bless the mark!) to indemnify them at a future period by subscriptions—they may quietly make up their minds to bid an everlasting adieu to their outlay.

There was, among the letters I received upon this memorable day, an authoritative intimation from an influential quarter, that my addresses to Miss St. Lawrence would be henceforth dispensed with. Whether the young lady herself was aware of this announcement, I know not, and I never inquired, for my attention was drawn from the subject by a petition from Clarkson against my return, which gave me no little uneasiness. The expense of defending my seat I understood would be heavy, and not considering the seat worth it, I resolved to resign. Having formed

this intention, I determined on returning to Kilnaflesk—the St. Lawrence affair was at an end; so that the only obstacle to my renewing my addresses to the beautiful Mary Sheridan was now removed.

"So you *will* leave us?" said Murrough, one Sunday, that he, Mr. Herbert, and I, were walking together towards St. Patrick's Cathedral.

"Yes," I replied, "I have made up my mind."

"Are you tired of the honourable house?" asked Mr. Herbert.

"No Sir, but I am extremely tired of spending my money on parliamentary projects."

"Besides which," said Murrough, "I do not think this parliament will last long, so that you have a fresh chance the next election. And at all events, vacancies will from time to time occur, which will give you chances in abundance, should you feel inclined to avail yourself of them."

"Why, you speak," said Mr. Herbert, "as

if you had all the constituencies in the kingdom at your command. Now, a thousand things may occur to turn the scale of a contest; and not among the least is the undue interference of the government in placing a military force near the hustings, ostensibly to keep the peace, but in reality with the purpose of obstructing the popular interest. I understand that this was tried at several places at the last general election."

"Why, they tried it in Galway," replied Murrough, "and I got rid of them by a splendid coup-de-maitre. I saw the object for which the military had been placed there, so I instantly took measures to make the redcoats my own partisans. I broke forth into a flowery eulogium on the army—I indignantly reprobated military flogging; I censured the unfairness of pensioning the widows and children of officers, and not extending this advantage to the widows and children of the gallant privates who sustained by far the greater part of the hardships of military

service, and I vowed I should support the abolition of flogging, and of every other military grievance, in my place in parliament. Sir, you'd have sworn the redcoats all took me for an angel! the poor fellows were restrained by the strictness of military discipline from cheering with their voices; but their glowing faces showed that I had found my way to all their hearts, and they all clapped their pipeclays, *con amore*. When the commanding officer saw the effect of my speech upon his men, I believe he apprehended a mutiny—at all events, he was resolved to bring them out of the reach of my dangerous influence, for he called out 'Right face! Quick march!' and the court was cleared of redcoats in an instant."

"Admirable!" exclaimed Mr. Herbert. "Why, O'Driscoll, you've a singular knack of inventing expedients for every emergency—but here's the church door—let us enter—I hope we are not late."

We entered the venerable pile, and bent our

minds to a frame of reverential feeling suited to the sacred solemnity of the Protestant High Mass, as the Dissenters call the Cathedral service of the Church of England. The strains of the noble organ pealed and thundered through the aisles and arches; the symphony ceased, and the anthem was sung by the choir, while the high, sweet voices of the singing boys were blended with the solemn harmony, like the wild warblings of a thousand birds. There was something soothing in the impressive solemnity of the scene; and of its tranquillizing influence my mind stood much in need, harassed as it was by the various perplexing occurrences with which I was surrounded. I entered into a stricter scrutiny of my actions and impulses than I had done for many months, and I blamed myself severely for suffering the motives of either ambition or avarice to lead me away from Mary Sheridan. It was true, she had refused the offer of my hand, but the generous motive that had influenced her conduct endeared her the more

to me: besides which, I felt ashamed at having allowed her to excel me in generosity. All my former affection for Mary now returned; in fact it had only been repressed by constant effort. The poor girl had been very ill; I upbraided myself with inhumanity in not having visited her when last at Kilnaflesk, although at the time I had given myself great credit for my stoical forbearance. And, finally, I built myself a fairy edifice of love and happiness, which I promised I would realize as soon as possible after my return to Kilnaflesk. But then, the question occurred, would Mary persist in her refusal?

Should she do so, why then, as a pis-aller, I might venture on Clara M'Neile's liberation. The *romance* of the exploit had its charms, and the lady's hand was no mean guerdon. "I shall try for Mary first, though," I mentally resolved.

CHAPTER XXIII.

" Are then all your pleasures vain ?
Are there none exempt from pain ?
Is there no delight nor joy,
But your fondest hopes will cloy ? "

WEBBER.

I ARRIVED at home without a single adventure. On entering the avenue at Kilnaflesk, I saw a horseman advancing from the wild birch wood within the enclosure. On a nearer approach, I recognized Mr. Patrick Lawlor, the gentleman who had been of such essential utility to Murrough, as man of all work at the election. His face was expressive of a very high degree of self-gratulation, and after the first salutations had passed, he proceeded to inform me of an ingenious exploit by which he had narrowly escaped a large fine on the preceding day.

" You know my little private establishment up yonder in the hills?" said he, winking, and pointing with inverted thumb to the quarter where his private still was situated; " well, Sir, the gaugers were suddenly changed upon us—new brooms sweep clean, and we've got a stiff English fellow here, who's to let nothing pass that he can help—ould Sullivan used never to come near our bohereen, if he found a few gallons now and then at his door of a morning at cock-crow—nobody'd know or care who left it, and no questions asked. But not so now—we've new cards to play—and last night, after dinner, I threw off the gentleman for a while and put on the blackguard—on with my felt hat and big frieze trusty; and I was driving a couple of cars of pottheen soft and easy along the road, when one of our gossoons came running up to tell me that a strange man, followed by a couple of redcoats, was coming towards us as fast as their horses could carry them. There were no bohereens at hand—there was a plaguy bright moon, and no chance of concealing the stuff in hedge or

ditch if this should be the gauger, and my mind misgave me that it was, though we hadn't expected him till next week. So as soon as he came up, sure enough he hallooed to me to stop, and bid the sojers examine the casks. 'Don't touch the casks,' says, I, 'for your lives, boys,' says I; 'they're illicit sperits that I've made a seizure of,' says I, 'and I'm going into town to give them up to the new gauger,' says I. 'Are you so, my honest man?' says he, 'I'm the gauger,' says he, 'and what's your name?' says he. 'Mick Brennan, Sir,' says I, 'at your honour's service, and I hope you won't forget me by and by.' 'Never fear, honest Mick,' says the gauger, 'so go into town with the sperits, and my wife will give you supper,' says he, 'and I'd thank you to tell me the shortest way to Slieveballykillmac-Muckeridgetown, for I've got the hard word of a still that's owned by a fellow of the name of Lawlor,' says he, 'and I want to come athurt it if I can,' says he, 'for I'm told he has baffled and bothered all the gaugers that came hereto-

fore,' says he. 'Yes, your honour,' says I, 'Pat Lawlor's a cute blackguard,' says I, 'and thinks nothing of bothering a gauger,' says I, 'and I know Slieveballykillmac-Muckeridge-town as well as I know my right hand,' says I. And with that I gave him a north-south-east-west direction to go to the place, that I told him was fair and straight before him and that he couldn't mistake; but troth it would have puzzled Old Nick to understand it. 'Come show us the way,' says he, 'and one of the sojers will lead the horses and cars with the sperits into town.' 'With all the pleasure in life,' says I, 'but you can't spare one of the sojers, nor more if you had them, for Pat Lawlor's a desperate villian,' says I, 'and keeps guns to shoot gaugers and sojers, so you'll surely have a scrimmage; and besides, you can't mistake your way.' 'Oho!' says the gauger, 'is that the sort of man Pat Lawlor is?' 'Every inch of him,' says I. 'Well then, since yourself can't come,' says he, 'will you lend us the loan of the gossoon?' 'Och,

with all my heart!' says I; 'tramp, Jackeen!' So the sojers and the gauger went off, and *I* saved my two cars of sperits, and I'll engage my little Jacky—ha! ha!—is as cute as his betters—devil a wink or a nudge did I give him!—and when he got the gauger and his men among the hills, he brought them first into the dickens of a quagmire where their horses could neither go backwards nor forwards; and then, when he had them in limbo, the little cur skelped off under cover of the rocks and furze-bushes to his daddy's still, five miles off, and warned our people, for fear of interlopers—but there wasn't much danger of *that*, for it was not till this morning the redcoats could get out of the bog, and I hear they've lost one of their horses in a bog-hole! ha! ha! ha!"

"I should think, Mr. Lawlor, that this was not the best moral training in the world for your son."

"Oh, a frolic of this sort will never hurt Jackeen—he's his daddy's son all over—he

was suckled on whiskey, I may say, and indeed it would be devilish hard to wean him. But now that I've told you my story, Mr Grant, (and I couldn't keep it in,) pray allow me to ask you what truth there is in the reports of your being unseated?—the newspapers say you won't defend, and your father is as angry as the vengeance at it."

"Angry! I am exceedingly sorry to hear it —is he very much displeased?"

"So much so that I think he couldn't well be worse—but here he comes walking down the avenue—you'll know all about it in a twinkling."

I alighted from my horse, and went to meet my father. He extended his hand with an air of great coldness, but his manner by no means evinced the violent displeasure that Lawlor had led me to expect. "Soh! my fine fellow," said he, "here's the end of your great parliamentary exploits! I always said, you know, that you were a jackass, 'pon my honour! You know I did—a regular jackass.

And I believe you always thought yourself a Solomon. And now, pray who was right and who was wrong? What have you been doing with all the money you got? Did Father O'Dowd or Father O'Guggerty ever refund you a rap of the cash you advanced to secure your election, and which they promised to repay? I'll swear they didn't — not a copper, 'faith! Oh, the sly blades! I knew how it would be. Where's your seat in parliament? Gone. Where's all your money? Gone. Where's Miss St. Lawrence? Gone. Everything's gone but yourself, and when all's gone that was worth keeping, here you come back among us like a bad shilling. But it all comes of aiding popery and radicalism, and that sort of despicable trumpery—'pon my honour it does. No luck can attend the abettors of such unconstitutional principles, and so I've a thousand times told you, but you thought you were wiser than your father."

"Sir, if my return to Kilnaflesk displeases you, I can easily remain with Mr. Herbert,

who gave me a most cordial invitation to make his house my home at all times."

"No, you poor devil," replied Captain Grant in a softened tone; "bad as you are, I don't want to expatriate you — we won't quite do *that*. But I hope you'll be wiser in future, and instead of running wild after the House of Commons, that you'll spend your time in rational pursuits, such as hunting, shooting and fishing. And now tell me, how is your grandmother?"

"In excellent health and spirits—she desired her regards to you, Sir."

"Did she?" exclaimed Captain Grant, with the air of a man who is pleased at a compliment he did not expect; "an admirable old woman—admirable, 'pon my honour. I always said so, though she and I had various little miffs while she lived here. Somehow or other I—a—I sometimes got the worst of it, for you know I did not like to press an argument against a woman, so that a bystander might often have thought that she—she—a—

beat me in our little disputations. And she sent her regards to me? Right, upon my honour! And pray what does she think of your being unseated?"

"Indeed, Sir, she does not much care—she seemed much more anxious that I should honestly discharge my trust while I retained it."

"Yes—I think that was the only weak point about her; she had always such a strong inclination towards radicalism and all that—she had, upon my honour. But no woman is a Solomon on all points. She had vastly more sense in every respect than women in general—nothing, in fact, that she was not up to. I recollect when my black hunter Shiver-the-wind was given over by the farriers, she prescribed something that cured him, and she told me he wouldn't have been three days sick if I had taken her advice at first—I don't doubt it—I don't at all doubt it, though I wouldn't allow it at the time, for one hates knocking

under to a woman in every thing. But she 's an admirable old woman, beyond doubt.—And so she does not much care for your losing your seat ?"

" Why, Sir, Murrough says that the next election I'll have fifty chances of getting in as he did, really gratis."

" D—n Murrough ! and d—n his republican notions, and d—n the next election—I say d—n them all, collectively and individually. With my consent you never shall go a-guisarding at elections again—you never shall, upon my honour. You shall stay at home, and perform the duties of an honest country gentleman, who'll employ the poor around him, drink his bottle, follow his own hounds, and kill his own beef and mutton."

" And if the honest country gentleman could append the distinction of M.P. to his name without expense"—

" Without expense ! upon my honour you'd provoke a saint ! Are not £500 gone, and

do you talk of no expense? and are not you hocussed out of your M.P.-ship into the bargain by this blessed petition?"

"Why, Sir, I don't mean the last, but some future election."

"You mean fiddlestick—I desire you to say no more upon the subject, for it fairly sets one mad to think of it—upon my honour it does. And that precious Murrough of yours, how does he get on? I am told he is going to be married to a pair of old maids, the miss O'Moores—they're rich, and they will be richer. Murrough knows how to provide a snug berth for himself. I wish you had half his sense. There, now—the miss O'Moores—co-heiresses—sure *he* can't marry *both*, and if he takes one, what on earth need hinder you from securing the other? Six hundred a-year, I am told—a grand thing—grand, upon my honour."

"Why, Sir, so far from my dividing the spoils with Murrough, I am sorry to tell you he has lost them irretrievably himself." I then related the story of Murrough's amorous epistle

to the imaginary Evelina, and the successful rivalship of the French adventurer, Klopstockendock. My father was excessively diverted at the idea of Murrough's being outwitted by Klopstockendock, as he was aware of Murrough's excellent opinion of himself and of his powers; and the story put him into such good humour, that I felt I might look on my forgiveness as finally conceded. When we reached the house, we paused for a moment on the hall-door steps; they commanded a distant view of the grove of tall oaks, which, far overtopping the intervening plantations, screened the cottage of Mrs. Sheridan from the rest of the domain. I gazed on the trees, as if I could have learned from them tidings of the inmates of the cottage. My father followed the direction of my eyes and shook his head.

"That poor girl," said he, "is given over—Doctor O'Keeffe was there last week and says she has no chance—the case is consumptive, I believe—her poor mother is, from day to day, expecting the worst. And no one knows what

on earth caused it all, for a stronger, finer, healthier-looking girl than poor Mary was not in the parish. Her mother tells me she began with low spirits and loss of appetite—used often to sit for whole days without saying a word. Then she often got pale and red, and felt lassitude and shivering—poor thing, I pity her very much indeed! Poor Mary! she is following her brother fast—it will break the widow's heart to lose two such fine children one after the other—it will, upon my honour." Captain Grant spoke this with much feeling, and I found it totally impossible to master my emotions. I resolved to steal away to the cottage as soon as I possibly could, and restore my darling Mary, if I were permitted, to life, and health, and happiness. It was not now more than two o'clock, so that if I could disengage myself from my father, I had ample time to visit Mary and return before dinner.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"For Love will still be lord of all."

SCOTT.

FORTUNE favoured my purpose; for the moment I went up stairs to make certain changes in my dress, Lawlor and the steward summoned captain Grant away to sell some large trees at the rear of the house, the intended purchaser of which was waiting without. I then pursued my way, unperceived, to the cottage. The path was a wild, sequestered wood walk, the whole length of which lay through oak and hazel coppice, so that my visit ran no risk of being observed. I walked fast, and in half an hour reached the little verdant meadow between the cottage and the river, with its steep bosky banks of dwarf hawthorn and holly, whose branches dipped their

ends into the water. The wood, as I believe I have elsewhere said, opened in this place to the south, so that the cottage and the little space around caught every gleam of sunshine all the year. And now, although the month was February, the scene had but little of the coldness of winter; the woodbine and lilac had already put forth their tender greens, and a bright evening sun glanced cheerfully upon the latticed window.

I paused ere I entered the dwelling; the sad though sweet emotions excited by all the surrounding mementos of the poor invalid, took possession of my heart, and I felt that oppression of the spirits, that internal heaving of the breast, that seeks relief in tears. But while I irresolutely lingered, my nurse passed within; she saw me through the open door, and laying a finger on her lip as a signal for silence, she beckoned to me to enter. A brisk turf fire was burning on the hearth, on which she was preparing some light dinner for Mary. I asked, in a whisper, whether she felt better.

" Much better to-day, thank God," replied her mother, " though it 's hard to depend on that, for she 's one day better and another day worse. She got up this morning, and as the sun was so warm she was walking about now and then in the meadow till an hour ago, and then she felt tired and lay down on the bed. I'll step and try is she asleep."

" No, do not, nurse, I beg of you—I will see myself."

" You'd waken her," said she.

" Never fear," said I, taking off my shoes and stepping noiselessly across the clean tiled floor into Mary's apartment. I approached the bed —the neat checquer curtains were all drawn, save where Mary had restlessly pushed aside the curtain next her head, and kept it half raised with the aid of a chair. Her breathing told that she was now asleep, and I cautiously advanced until I stood quite close to the bed. I looked through the narrow slit between the curtains, and beheld the poor sleeper; I was shocked at the change that

illness had made in her appearance; she was deadly pale, and her once plump face was now emaciated and wasted, but it was not in the power of illness to alter its exquisitely lovely outline. She occasionally moved, as one who slept uneasily, and at length she awoke and opened her large dark eyes. The curtains quite concealed me from her view, and I was afraid to make myself known lest the effect of surprise might be injurious; but I still lingered, earnestly gazing on her wan yet lovely cheek, which seemed occasionally tinted with a slight and transient glow, as some painful recollection would appear to cross her mind. I continued to stand by the bed, anxiously watching every change in the expression of her beautiful countenance. At last, a few tears trembled in the long black eyelashes and stole down her face; she sighed heavily, and my name escaped her lips! It was but in a whisper, but could it baffle the acuteness of a lover's ear? O! what a tale it told! Another sigh followed—it seemed

a sigh of bitter anguish, and Mary buried her face in the clothes and sobbed once or twice convulsively. With difficulty I refrained from making myself known, and clasping the faithful, affectionate girl to my heart. But I *did* refrain. I silently returned to the outer apartment, and fearing the effect of violent surprise on a person in her delicate state, I informed nurse that I had seen her awaken, and requested she would tell her that I had returned from Dublin and might visit the cottage in the course of the day. My nurse complied, and I heard Mary ask,

"Who told you that, mother?"

"A young man who passed here just now, my dear."

"What young man, mother?"

My nurse, unprepared with an evasion, hesitated; Mary interpreted her mother's hesitation her own way, and exclaimed, "Oh mother! I am sure—I know—it was himself!"

"She has guessed you're here," said the old

woman advancing to the door of the apartment, "and indeed I didn't tell her, so you may as well come in."

I accordingly re-entered the sleeping room and went over to the bed. In my nurse's presence I contented myself with taking Mary's hand and pressing it to my lips—the dear girl smiled, and I fondly flattered myself that I saw in her smile the promise of renovated health, and peace, and spirits.

"It's the first time I have seen her smile these many weeks," said her mother; "God bless you, Mr. John, the doctor could not make her do so much." At this moment a noise in the outer apartment informed me that the vessel which contained the culinary preparations had boiled over, a circumstance which gave me great delight, as it called off nurse to repair the mischief, and left me alone with Mary.

"I am come to you once more, love," whispered I; "I am come to you never to leave you again."

"Oh, I have been very, very ill since I saw you," said Mary.

"I know it, dearest, and I know what caused it. I know the whole story, love—I was gazing on you here while you slept, a few minutes since,—gazing on the face I love best in the world—your slumbers were troubled and unrefreshing, you awoke—the tears filled your eyes, and you pronounced my name! Oh, Mary, Mary! you little thought your lover was so near you then! You sent me from you sorrowing and dejected, when I offered you my hand—you told me to seek some ambitious alliance—you told me to marry miss St. Lawrence—I tried it, and ambition did not thrive with me—the St. Lawrences refused me, and I richly deserved it for offering my hand to Henrietta, while you alone had possession of my heart. I was blindly hurried on, although I felt all along a conviction that I could not have luck for my duplicity. I now return to *you*, dearest Mary, for I cannot have happiness with any body else—will *you* refuse me now?"

"Oh, no," said Mary, faintly; "if I live I'll be true to you."

These few simple words went to my heart, for they seemed to proceed from Mary's inmost soul. "But then," she added, hesitating, "if Captain Grant"—

"Now, not one word of that," I interrupted; "I promise you that I will arrange all that to your perfect satisfaction."

"But that's not what I mean," said Mary, blushing deeply. "You may manage to keep it a secret, perhaps, well enough; but what I don't like is, when I think of Captain Grant's kindness to myself and my mother at all times. I feel like a thief coming stealing his son after all his good nature, which he'd rather see you dead than see, I do suppose, if ever he found it out."

"Now, Mary, is it fair or just that you and I should break our hearts and pine away for each other all our lives, just because Captain Grant would rather I married some rich woman I couldn't care a straw for?"

"But Captain Grant's high blood"—said Mary.

"High blood! high blood!" repeated I, in huge disdain; "give me *pure* blood any day, far rather than *high* blood! Give *me* the blood that wanders in an azure current through the veins, and glows in roseate loveliness upon the healthful cheek of rustic beauty—give it me ten thousand times rather than the stream that a line of dukes and earls have transmitted to the puling, fretful dame of aristocracy, tainted with hereditary dissipation, and fevered with unwholesome hours, green tea, and vapours! O, Mary! could I ever exchange the rosy blush that steals upon your cheek, for the aristocratic puddle that stagnates in the veins of a pallid and hysterical duchess? Impossible—NATURE will assert her honest claims, and must be heard! And of what real value is high birth? Perhaps, if we trace back a few generations, your own birth may be higher than my father's; half a dozen generations ago we were nobody at all—common troopers, if that will satisfy you.

And why should we yield to the prejudice of birth?—a most senseless prejudice it is. We are all, I trust, Christians; and if so, we should reflect that the divine Founder of our faith, who commands the adoration of the kings of earth, appeared in this world as the son of a carpenter's wife; his apostles and disciples were poor fishermen and peasants; HE evinced no value for these silly and frivolous distinctions; and if we profess to be guided by his precept and example, we need not be ashamed to follow both in this particular. HE had his choice of all the ranks on the earth, and yet HE chose the lowest."

"That is very true," said Mary, after a pause; "I never thought of that before—but still"—

"Nay, Mary, I will not hear of any more objections. We have both suffered enough from your objections already. *Your* life has nearly paid the forfeit—Yes, you may blush now, and hide your young head in my bosom"—And I pressed the fascinating being to my heart, with a cheerful presentiment of future happiness, and a feeling of present delight, intense

in proportion to the contrast it formed to the mental uneasiness in which I had so recently been plunged.

"But you never told me yet," said Mary, "what plan you have fixed on to keep our marriage secret, and I'm anxious to know."

"If I could be sure your mother would stay out of the room for ten minutes longer," I replied, "I would tell you all about it; in fact, I have nearly the whole apparatus of secrecy at present about me."

"How is that?"

"You shall see;"—and I rose and looked inquiringly towards the door.

"O, don't be afraid that mother will come in for awhile; it will take her some time now to cook something else in place of that saucepan that upset; you have ten minutes good at any rate."

"Well then, Mary, look," and I took from my pockets successively the several materials of disguise that I meant to put in requisition. I first donned a shock red wig, which I pulled

nearly over my eyes ; I then put a black silk patch over my right eye, and indued a ferocious pair of carroty whiskers. I next slung a leather strap round my neck, the lower end of which supported my foot, while I fastened a short wooden leg to my knee, and stumped about the room,—an admirable counterfeit of lameness and mutilation. Finally, I threw off my cloak and displayed a sailor's jacket with a humpy shoulder, and I supplanted my stock with a black neckcloth. Mary stared with unfeigned astonishment: the metamorphose was complete. "Your nearest and dearest wouldn't know you," said she, "no more than if you weren't the same person at all. But how is all this to make our marriage secret?"

"I will tell you," replied I, throwing off the disguise with more haste than I had assumed it, lest nurse should return and see my "quaint, fantastic trim;" "did you ever see anything more critically like a weather beaten sailor?"

"Never!" exclaimed Mary.

"Well then, Mary, when you are quite re-

covered, I shall come here some evening in my character of sailor; I'll tell your mother some story of a shipwreck, and beg a night's lodging in the cottage. She will probably refuse to comply, but you can put in a good word for me, and between us both we'll contrive to overcome her objections. Well, I'll sit and chat, and tell my adventures, and I'll give her a couple of good shawls or some such thing that I'll say I saved out of the wreck; and I'll pull out some gold, and talk big about more; and before the night's over, I'll take a sudden start to make love to you, Mary, like a true jolly tar, and I'll end the matter with a smacking kiss and an offer of marriage. You can be as shy and coy as ever you please, (so you don't refuse me,) and I'll lay any wager that the sight of the gold will make nurse jump at the offer. Well, my love, I shall come in sailor's trim from time to time to visit you until you are quite recovered, and then Father Dominick may marry us any day you please. To be sure, the law says the parson

ought to do it instead of the priest, but the fewer risks the better; the priest binds us just as well in the sight of heaven, and for any thing else, I *know* that Mary trusts my honour."

"Trust you? God knows then I do!"

"Then, Mary, your husband can be with you every day in the year; and the sailor can come now and then, in the face of the people, whenever his ship comes into port, and his occasional visits will amply account for any little addition to the family that may occupy a cradle by the fireside within a year or so. Was there ever a plan better dovetailed together? Who the deuce would ever find it out? Mary, my precious Mary, is married to a jolly sailor by her parish priest, a devilish ugly red-haired fellow, with a wooden leg and a patch on his eye, to be sure, but the wilful girl will have him in spite of his ugliness. Well, they're married, the sailor stays a day or two—nobody knows whether he does or not, for the cottage is lonesome, and very few of the neighbours

ever come near it. But supposing they do, and inquire for the bridegroom—oh, he 's gone to his ship—his ship!—*that* often keeps him away for a month or six weeks at a time,—but he comes now and then for the sake of appearance. Well, a year soon runs about—Mary has an infant"—

"With a wooden leg and a red wig, I hope," said Mary laughing, "for the sake of my good name."

"No, no, Mary, the poor baby needn't have wooden legs nor any of his father's defects or deformities—but he slumbers in his cradle or sits in his mother's lap—no scandal at all,—the sailor is his father, and Mary's good name is as safe as a church, although people may wonder that such a beautiful young girl would marry such a limping, battered, shattered, weather-beaten hobgoblin, as the valiant tar her husband; but money, they'll say, will coax girls to do queerer things than that. Now, love, you know my whole plan, and I think your heart is

lighter, and your spirits no comparison better than before I came in. Will you kiss the jolly sailor?"

Mary, laughing and blushing, held out her face for a kiss, which was bestowed with an ardent sincerity of affection, not often, I believe, to be met with in the annals of the modern votaries of Hymen. I then returned home to dinner, where a lecture of appalling length awaited me from uncle Henry, for having omitted to turn my M.P.-ship to account while it lasted, either in the matrimonial way, or in some advantageous coalition with government. But I cared not, for my spirits had risen like quicksilver since my interview with Mary; I felt that solid happiness was in my power, and all subjects unconnected with the leading purpose that engrossed my heart were totally indifferent to me.

Spring advanced; and the sorrow that had preyed on Mary having given place to hope, her health was speedily restored. It was one

evening in the beginning of April, that I first presented myself to Mrs. Sheridan in the guise of a sailor, and requested the shelter of her cottage for the night. She hesitated ere she answered, for she seemed to think me an extremely suspicious looking character.

"I am a lone widow," she replied at length, "and I've nobody living in the house but myself and this girl. I wouldn't refuse you, however, only that I know you'll get a night's lodging and welcome at Squire Grant's, above there, at the great house."

"But I'm damnably tired, my good woman. I couldn't walk to the squire's if you gave me a hogshead of grog for it, shiver my timbers if I could! So, d'ye see, I'll cast anchor here for this night, mother, and to-morrow, mayhap, I'll take leave o'ye with a stiff breeze astern."

The widow still hesitated.

"I think you may let him stay, mother," pleaded Mary; "the poor man has got a

wooden leg, and it would be cruel to let him go further to-night. I can sleep with you, and we can put him into my bed-room."

"Thank'ee, sweetheart, thank'ee! You're a tight nice frigate for whoever has the luck to steer ye!"

"I wish we had some of the neighbours here," said Mrs. Sheridan, still looking doubtful.

"For what, now, mother?" asked Mary; "is it afraid of the sailor you are?"

"No, my dear, I'm not a bit afraid of him, but then"—

"Why then, ma'am," said I, "since you arn't afeard of me, I suppose I may as well sit down by the fire." And I walked into the house and took my seat.

"Welcome kindly, good man," said Mrs. Sheridan; her manner, however, not perfectly in unison with her words. But, when we all sat down, we soon became extremely gracious and colloquial; nurse and Mary inquired my adventures, and as Mrs. Sheridan's fund of

credulity seemed tolerably ample, I spun many tough yarns *, to the great entertainment of Mary, who was surprised and amused at the ready invention with which I furnished incidents in answer to the numerous queries regarding my travels with which my kind hostess assailed me.

"And how did you happen to be shipwrecked?" asked she.

"Why, mother, in a very uncomfortable way, I must confess. We were one moment elevated to the acme of altitude on the summit of a hysterical billow; and the next, we were lowered by an instantaneous descent to the immeasurable depths of profundity."

"O, murder!" cried the widow; "then you were in a sore taking sure enough, for the very sound of them words is like a storm. But won't you explain it plainer to me, Sir, if you please? I'm not up to that high English."

"Why, mother," said Mary, "it only means

* Told incredible stories.

'Here we go up, up, up,
And here we go down, down, downy.'

That 's the English of it."

"Well, and what happened you then, Sir?"

"We had doubled Cape Clear, and were sailing under jury-masts norrod, when a breeze sprung up south-west by west that sent us spinning at the rate of sixty knots an hour. It was pleasant going enough, if we hadn't run foul of a huge shoal of whales who were quietly sailing along the Atlantic to spend the fashionable season with their friends in the Mediterranean. The ship gave the devil of a lurch, and her jibboom poked out the ould whale's eye; on which the whole tribe rushed against her with such fury that they staved in the side of the cook-room and captain's cabin, and we'd all have gone to Davy's locker if the next wave hadn't luckily landed us high and dry between a couple of rocks."

"Allillew! and what became of the whales?"

"Why, we gave them a broadside that spun

them off like so many humming-tops about their business."

"Well, well! it's no joke to be at sea, my honest man. Sailors see a power of strange places. I dare say you've crossed the line in your rambles?"

"The line? It 's often I saw the clothes drying on it, mother. It would do your heart good to see the girls hanging them up, the pretty tawny creatures—there 's some of them as black as your shoe."

"Pretty! why, who the deuce would consider that to be beauty?"

"Why, mother, tastes differ to be sure, and I do confess that a black girl wouldn't be thought much of in Ireland. But a real beauty *there* should be as black as the crook, have red eyes, and weigh a ton. If she hadn't all these points she needn't hope for any decent sort of a match."

"Oh, then, Mary," said the widow, turning to her daughter and laughing, "*you'd* have a

very poor chance of a husband in that country."

"She might have a better chance of one here," said I, "for shiver my topsails, but I'd marry her myself as soon as look at her—that is, if she lets me."

Mary looked coy, and blushed extremely well; the widow smiled, and I felt that by this time I occupied a favourable footing in my hostess's good graces. "Mary's poor," said she, "and no man will take her that 's looking for a fortune."

"Blast fortune!" I exclaimed, disdainfully, "haven't I enough for both?" and I pulled out a purse with sixteen or eighteen guineas in it, and carelessly flung it into the old woman's lap; "there, mother, I'll bestow that on you if you care to keep it—it 's often that old purse sprung a leak, but somehow or other the chinks were always stopped again."

"But, gracious goodness, Sir!" cried the widow, holding out the purse, "why should *I*

keep this? I've no call to it at all, Sir,—take it back, for mercy's sake."

"Avast there, my good friend," said I, motioning away the proffered purse. "It 's yours if the girl is mine—we sailors are a free-hearted, open-handed generation—there 's no curmudgeons to be had among the tars! I've taken a fancy to your daughter, and I'll marry her as soon as ever the priest can come to splice us, and I don't see that she says me nay, for all her blushing and smirking there.—Shiver my sky-scraper, but I wouldn't ask better fun than to marry her this minute, d—n me!" and I caught the unresisting girl in my arms, and smothered her with kisses.

"Fie, Mary! for shame, I say!" exclaimed the widow, rising to interpose. Mary struggled to free herself—my wooden leg got entangled in the chair, and our trio were instantly laid sprawling on the floor. I rose immediately, and assuming an aspect of sedateness, complained of fatigue, and asked permission to re-

tire to bed, which the widow, half laughing, yet half angry, vouchsafed to concede. "But you *must* keep the purse," said she, extending it again; "indeed, indeed, such a thing was never heard of, as for me to keep the like."

"Why, mother, you said Mary had no fortune—now let *that* be her fortune, and I'll take her with it if you insist upon giving it back to me; but I don't want cash, for I've lashings of it—there 's my bounty and my pay, and prize-money, now and then, and double allowance.—Why, mother, I roll in his Majesty's coin—I've more money than I know what to do with, and so good night t'ye." I took a candle, and entered the bed-room they had previously told me to occupy. I left the door a little way open, and listening attentively, heard nurse say to Mary, "Well, what do you think of him, Mary?"

"Think!" repeated Mary, "why, I think it was luck blew him to us. I'd never get a better match."

"But his timber shin!" said nurse, "and he 's such an ugly brute!"

" Why, one would rather have human bones than the best oak sticks to be sure, ma'am; but a girl can't get every thing, and who would I meet with such a purse? My heart jumped into my mouth, when I saw the nest of yellow guineas."

" Why then, Mary, my girl, I never dreamt that you'd marry for money! It's only now I'm finding out your mind. But have a care of him for all his purse and his palaver—how would it be if he's married before? Those sogers and sailors have a rag on every bush."

" I'll go bail for him, mother, that he's honest. Sure otherwise he need not have bestowed his purse upon you: it was easy for him to keep it in his pocket if he meant to play tricks upon us."

" Why indeed that's true, I must confess—and may be you couldn't do better than take him, though I'd rather see you married to some man with whole bones and two eyes in his head."

" Sure enough for you, mother; but then, as

I told you before, a poor girl can't get every thing; and old Mr. Henry Grant often told me to marry a man without either arms or legs provided he had money.—La, mother, this man is not such a cripple at all! he has one leg and one eye at any rate, and then he has got such a knowing, coaxing, roguish look with the eye that's left, that he'd wheedle a girl's heart out of her body (if winking and splinking was to do it) ten times sooner than many a booby who has got a pair of sheep's eyes in his head. And then his wooden leg —why, he stumps about upon it beautifully; and his real leg isn't cut off at all, it is only cocked up, and perhaps will be as well as ever yet. The long and the short of it is, I have fixed my heart upon him."

"Oh musha—who'd have ever thought—but I'll say no more since you're determined on having him, and this purse isn't a bad thing either, though indeed I wish the poor man would take it back."

They then raked the fire and retired to bed, leaving me extremely diverted at the success that had hitherto attended my ruse. The following morning I renewed my addresses, to which the old woman vouchsafed a most gracious and favourable hearing. I then departed, promising soon to return, and having doffed my disguise in a neighbouring thicket, I re-entered the cottage in the course of half an hour in my own proper character. Mrs. Sheridan seemed full of some important intelligence, and speedily informed me of the offer she had got for Mary.

"To tell heaven's truth, Mr. John, the man's an odd fish as ever I saw—a maimed, blind, battered poor wretch; but, however he has managed it, he has found the way to Mary's heart, what nobody else could ever do yet; and it isn't for me to speak unkindly of him, for he forced a purse of guineas on me, which, may be, the poor devil was badly able to spare."

"If Mary likes him nurse, let her have him by all means; I never approve of crossing young people in love."

"Surely not, Mr. John; and I'll go to the great house to-day and consult your father about it. It wouldn't be treating him properly to marry off Mary without his advice and permission. But here 's Mary—I'll say no more to you before her, for the creature couldn't but be ashamed."

Nurse donned her shawl and bonnet almost immediately after, and left me and Mary together. The instant she was fairly out of hearing, we burst into an uncontrollable paroxysm of laughter.

"Didn't we do it beautifully, Mary?"

"Yes, only I was afraid you kissed me a little too much last night."

"Oh, not at all—that was in character, you know—bluff, bold, and sailor-like."

"I was very much afraid," said she, "that your wig would have come off when we all fell down, and then the whole secret would

have been out. But mother no more knows, nor guesses, oh! no more than the man in the moon. Well, if you only hide yourself as well on Father Dominick, it will beat out all the tricks I ever heard of. We'll blind the world after that."

Methinks, at this period of my narrative, I hear some libertine reader exclaim with contemptuous emphasis,—

"What! *marry* Mary Sheridan? *marry* a peasant girl? why not seek to obtain her upon *cheaper terms?*"

Yes, thou pestilential cankerworm of society, —no other thought than that of honourable marriage was ever for one moment harboured in my breast.

He, who for a base and transient gratification, could cloud her honest brow with shame, —who could plant in her innocent bosom the bitter thorn of remorse,—who could sully the purity of her trusting, taintless soul,—who could risk her everlasting happiness as well as her temporal felicity,—the wretch who were

capable of *this*, were deserving of the sharpest torments an eternal hell can number in its catalogue of miseries.

"*Cheaper terms*"!—The sacrifice of soul and body *cheap!* The calculation is well worthy of the libertine.

I felt that to love Mary once, was to love her for ever. I looked forward with delight to the task of enlarging her mind, expanding her conceptions, and moulding her docile and affectionate heart to congenial excellence. In short, my attachment was one which could only expire in the grave, and which, when the chains of death were broken, might hope

> "In heaven again to waken,
> And repossess the heart."

CHAPTER XXV.

" How happy is life
Now Chloe's my wife,
No troubles our bosoms oppress;
We dance and we sing
Like birds in the spring
To find we are crown'd with success."

OLD FARCE.

At dinner that day, the conversation turned on Mary's approaching marriage with the sailor.

" I am glad the poor girl has made off a man to her taste," said my father, " though it seems to me to be a very singular taste, upon my honour! and reflects no credit whatever upon Mary's judgment or delicacy—not the least, I protest! Mrs. Sheridan describes the lover as a shattered poor devil, half flesh and blood, half timber! How any girl can bring

herself to marry a wooden man, I can't conceive—not I, 'pon my honour, if he had ever so much money."

"That 's because you haven't common sense," interposed uncle Henry, with a sneer of sardonic contempt; "the girl shows more sense than ever I suspected her of. What matter if she married a bogstick, provided her husband had the sinews of war? she has earned a warm place in my esteem—she has done far more wisely than if she had married a smock-faced country boy without a fraction. We must all go to the wedding."

"Certainly," said my father, "we owe them that compliment. You'll come, Jack, won't you? oh, you positively must—we must all make the Sheridans that compliment, and I'll pay the marriage dues to the priest.

"Not with my consent," said uncle Henry; "the bridegroom has given the widow a parcel of guineas, she says, and let her pay for the wedding out of that."

"That is an ungenerous idea, sir," said cap-

tain Grant; "the young couple will want many things for an outfit that will need all the cash they can raise."

"Not at all! you forget that the fellow is a sailor, and his ship is his home, and his hammock all the furniture he wants."

"Oh, well, well—we must help the bride; they're a deserving little family, and we won't go so close to the wind altogether upon an occasion like this — upon my honour we won't."

I trembled, notwithstanding the excellence of my nautical disguise, lest any awkward accident should betray me to my father, as he expressed his determination to be present at our wedding. He begged of me again and again to attend the nuptials, to compliment my nurse, and I feared his pertinacity might cause me serious inconvenience, as I had not the power of creating a duplicate of myself to perform the part of second Sosia on the occasion. I therefore excused myself from attending, on the plea of a previous engagement to a boating

party; and it was with infinite difficulty I was able to prevail on captain Grant to accept this apology.

At length the day arrived that was to make my Mary mine for ever. My fears of detection redoubled as the hour approached. I sat, in my disguise, in Mary's cottage; and I felt like a criminal about to undergo the sentence of the law when my father and uncle entered, followed shortly after by father Dominick and two or three peasants. But I was tied to the stake and could not now recede, and I felt I had nothing for it but to play out the play manfully. My father entered into conversation with me, little dreaming that it was his hopeful son he was addressing.

"Well, my honest fellow," said he, "I wish you joy of the wife you're going to get—it isn't every weather-beaten tar gets so well into port—upon my honour it isn't. Mary is a treasure of a girl—I know her from her infancy—(Nay, you need not blush now, Mary—all I say of

you is true—upon my honour it is.) So my jolly old fellow, you may think yourself in devilish luck, as every one must think that knows your bride."

"You are very good to say so, sir," said I, in a voice so thoroughly disguised, that captain Grant, whose penetration was never very acute, did not at all recognise it, "and I feel it a great honour to see you at the wedding, and also this other good gentleman."

"I must thank you too, Sir," said Mary, curtseying, "and you, Mr. Henry—you have honoured our cottage much more than we deserved."

"Not at all, Mary, not at all; and I tried to make that hopeful son of mine come too, but upon my honour I couldn't succeed—he's a wilful scamp—'pon my honour he is, and in spite of all I could say he went off to some d——d boating party—he should have thought more of his nurse, 'pon my honour he should, on such an occasion as this."

" Oh, Sir," said the widow, " I'm sure, had he been at home, he would have been with us this day."

" He is a fine young man," said father Dominick: " pity his stay in the House of Commons was so short. But he will get into Parliament again, no doubt, and, I trust, under happier auspices."

" I trust so," said uncle Henry; " the last time he entered Parliament it was under the auspices of father O'Dowd and father O'Guggerty, who led him into a scrape and left him there."

" Hush, hush, Sir," interrupted captain Grant, " we'll have no electioneering reminiscences now, if you please; perhaps the poor priests could not help it—we've learned experience, and that is quite sufficient, without talking about it at present. I think, father Dominick, the bride and bridegroom seem impatient—If I was you, I'd fire away at the ceremony—'pon my honour I would."

My father thus unconsciously gave the signal for the union of his only son with a peasant-girl. Poor man! had he known who stood before him, how his aristocratic vanity would have been up in arms! The priest obeyed—the ceremony was proceeded with, and ere many minutes had elapsed, Mary and I were made indissolubly one. I was married under the name of John Brien.

My father kissed his unsuspected daughter-in-law, and said with an air of great good-nature, "Now, Brien, my good fellow, be kind and true to Mary, you'll find her worthy of it —'pon my honour you will. The poor little girl is wholly dependent on you now for her happiness through life, and don't disappoint her. I wouldn't say this if I didn't know that sailors and soldiers are wild, roving blades. 'Pon my honour I know it, and therefore I beg that you'll treat her at all times as she merits. Should she ever run short of cash—she—a—a —she'll have a friend at Kilnaflesk."

" I thank your honour, captain—I'll be loving and true to the girl as long as I've breath in my body."

" That's right—that's right—and now good b'ye to you all, and God bless you. Father Dominick, I must have the satisfaction of saving Mary the marriage money." These latter words were spoken in a whisper as he passed the priest, into whose hand I saw him put a bank note of considerable value. I speedily took my departure on pretence of the urgent necessity of repairing to my vessel.

" What!" said the priest, " leave your bride upon her wedding day?"

" Oh, there's no help for it," said Mary, earnestly; " he'd lose ever so much if he wasn't in time to attend his captain's orders."

She contrived to engage his attention as well as that of the few other persons who were present, until I had ensconced myself in the deepest recesses of the wood. There I spent an hour in solitary musings, which it would

be painful *now* to recall to my recollection, and when the shades of evening fell, I returned to the cottage, rightly judging that the strangers had departed, and that it only contained its usual inmates.

"Welcome, son-in-law," said Mrs. Sheridan. "I did not think we would have seen you back again so soon."

"Here I am, then, mother, and I am now compelled to entrust you with a weighty secret."

"My gracious, what can it be about?"

"Promise me your faith, mother."

"Oh, mother do!" said Mary. The old woman paused.

"Do, dear mother, promise him," reiterated Mary.

"Give me your hand and word on it," said I, "and that's the next thing to an oath."

Mrs. Sheridan, thus solicited, consented.

"Now," said I, "you shall know who your son-in-law is—this disguise would be intoler-

ably irksome, did I always retain it in my hours of relaxation here." I unstrapped my wooden leg, loosened the belt that supported my foot, and stood erect. Nurse seemed surprised. I then dismissed my wig, patch, hunch-backed jacket, and red whiskers, and stood forth the undeniable John O'Brien Grant. Nurse stared in unfeigned astonishment; she seemed transfixed to the spot. She could hardly have been more astounded at any transformation. At length she clapped her hands vehemently, exclaiming, "Weirastrue! Weirastrue! the captain will murder us all."

"Not unless you tell him the secret," said I.

"Who? I? I'd sooner cut off my right hand than tell! I'd be in terror of my life! O, alanna, you've done a very dangerous thing!"

"Not in the least dangerous if we all keep our counsel. Sure what is there *now* to betray us, since I passed muster before papa and uncle Henry and the priest? eh, mother?"

"Why, nothing that I can see," replied the

widow, recovering herself; "but you can't wonder that such a thing should give one a good fright at first. And so *you* are the sailor? and *my* son-in-law? well! well! well! what will the world come to?"

And now, I must inform the reader that I tasted real happiness. The secluded situation of the cottage afforded me peculiar facilities for spending as much time as I pleased with my wife, without attracting the smallest observation. The *sailor* occasionally made his appearance, too; so that no surprise whatever was occasioned when, in the course of a few months, Mary's person unequivocally announced an approaching accouchement. Dear, dear Mary! what delightful hours I have spent at the cottage, instructing and expanding her intelligent mind! while her eager avidity to enlarge her ideas was increased by the tender attachment she felt for her instructor.

Captain Grant was seriously displeased with me for having been absent from the nuptials. "It's so seldom one can pay those poor people

a compliment," said he; "and then to skulk out of the way on the principal occasion for shewing them one's favour and countenance! it was a d—d shame for you, Jack! 'pon my honour it was! Your nurse did not merit such neglect at your hands! 'pon my honour she didn't! But now that you're a *great man*, and have been cashiered by Miss St. Lawrence, and kicked out of the House of Commons, I suppose you were quite too aristocratic in your views and notions to shew any mark of attachment to your humble friends."

"I should not have liked, Sir, to see Mary throw herself away on such an ugly fellow as I understand her husband is."

"What the d—l was it to you who she married, or how ugly he was? he was ugly enough to be sure — his under jaw projected like a saucer—you'd think he stuck it out on purpose, and he was hump-backed too, and pieced and patched all over, but what the d—l was that to you, I say, again? Mind

your hits better for the future, my fine fellow, I counsel you—and don't alienate your friends by neglect or ingratitude. That will be the best of your play—'pon my honour it will!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

" Such loveliness was in that beauteous form,
Such witching sweetness lurked beneath those eyelids,
That one might well forgive even greater faults
Than malice ever charged her with."

Poetical Letters from Spain, 1763.

As nothing is more stupidly uninteresting to readers in general than the detail of matrimonial felicity, I shall content myself with saying that every day my affection for my wife increased; while the excellent precautions I had taken were such as to exclude all danger of discovery—not a soul ever dreamt that I was the beautiful peasant girl's husband.

Five or six months after my marriage, I received the following epistle from Murrough :—

"House of Commons, Dublin,

"August 12, 1794.

"MY DEAR JACK,

"HERE I am as usual, hard at work in the service of my country, outrivalling the patriots, outbellowing the brawlers of the castle, striking terror into ministerial jackalls, and electrifying all with an unparalleled combination of wit, logic, satire, rhetoric, audacity, and eloquence. But I need not tell you that, for you know it from the newspapers. There are other cares and thoughts beside the concerns of this emerald realm, that intrude on my repose.

"Oh! you apathetic old devil! how I wish I possessed your stoical indifference to all the seductive fascinations which the fair sex can present, when unaccompanied with the solid appendages of wealth! In a word, I am enchained—I own that a pair of eyes of piercing jet, the loveliest of human countenances, the most sylphic of ethereal forms have done

their business with my heart. And who is this enchantress, you will ask? Miss Angelina Truby, an actress at the Crow Street Theatre, the most enlightened, intellectual, agreeable, bewitching—but no—I will say no more till I give her a right to preside at Glannatour. Oh, Jack, I wish you saw her acting Juliet! Capote me if I ever saw anything like it! Such taste! Such feeling! Such grace! Such witchery! Jack, she is an angel! She is very young and inexperienced, which adds to her other unrivalled charms the attraction of youthful freshness, the first tender bloom of the opening rose. When first I saw her, I retired after the play to the green-room, where I requested an introduction, but the angel was flown—she was never to be seen in the green-room, for her tastes and disposition led her, as it seems, to retirement, and even to seclusion. I wrote to express my high admiration of her talented performance, and requested permission to wait on her. I received a few lines in reply, frigid as the frozen snows

of arctic regions, expressing her disinclination to form any male acquaintance, except such as her professional intercourse rendered unavoidable. She assigned her unprotected orphan state as the reason of this unsociable and cruel resolution. I wrote a second time, gently censuring her resolve, representing myself as the pearl of discretion and propriety, and deploring the loss that society sustained from the absence of so brilliant an ornament. For my own part, I said, she had inspired me with sentiments of the deepest admiration, of which I panted for an opportunity to assure my enchantress in person. I received a billet, Jack—*evidently written with a trembling hand*—Oh! with what palpitating rapture did I break the seal! The angel condescended to receive me at tea that evening, provided that the manager and his lady were present. I flew at the appointed hour to her lodgings, on the wings of anxious love! I spoke in faltering accents, and vainly endeavoured to converse upon indif-

ferent topics. My tongue refused utterance to aught, save eulogiums on her beauty, her performance, her perfections. On parting, she would not permit me to take her hand. O, no! the tantalizing creature is as chastely scrupulous, as cautiously reserved, as celestial purity itself; but my mouth watered cruelly, Jack, at the cordial and protracted shake hands she bestowed on the old manager, thanking him in the sweetest, most melodious tones, for the countenance and protection he had afforded her. Jack, she reminds me of the sensitive plant, which trembles even at the slighest approach, and shrinks altogether from the touch. How I envied the lucky dog of a manager, when his broad, brown paw enclosed her fairy fingers. O! surely love is the monarch of ecstasies! Adieu!"

Soh! thought I to myself, my poor friend Murrough may be finally trepanned, if I do not hasten to Dublin to cast the guardian wing of prudence over his erratic propensities.

Two days after, I received another letter from him, which commenced in the following words:—

"Jack, the world must henceforth be a cheerless blank to me—my angel has twice refused me permission to visit her. Pity me, Jack! pity the dreary desolation of heart I am doomed henceforward to experience!"

Judging that the celestial Angelina would not long remain inexorable, I deemed it my kindest and most prudent course to hasten to Dublin, in order to ascertain with the calm, impartial eye of an unprejudiced observer, the merits of the lady, and thence to form an opinion of the chance of happiness that such a union could afford to Murrough. When I had formed this determination, the query occurred to my mind, "Are not you, Mr. John O'Brien Grant, a very pretty fellow to undertake the office of prudential monitor and guide? have you not just married a peasant-girl without sixpence? a being who, however amiable, endearing, and

even fascinating in her own secluded, humble sphere, is totally unfit to appear as the mistress of a gentleman's establishment? Put her at the head of your table, and how will she fill that position? Would not the graceful and accomplished actress be infinitely better adapted to support the character of wife to a person of respectability?" To all these suggestions I replied that the artificial blandishments of manner were not what I sought; that however they might fascinate the lover, they were totally incompetent to make the husband happy; that I knew by long and intimate experience the sincerity of Mary's heart; and finally, I had enough of uncle Henry in my composition to represent to myself that, in point of prudence, there was no comparison whatever between marrying Mary in the manner I had done, and marrying an actress; that Mary could not possibly cost me more than fifteen pounds a-year, even on the most extravagant calculation, as long as she continued to occupy her mother's cottage; while no person knew in what enor-

mous and ruinous expense a penniless actress might involve Murrough.

To Dublin, therefore, I hastened, where the newspapers amused their readers with occasional squibs at Murrough, who, as they averred, had been regularly basilisked at first sight. When I met the love-sick swain, his face was radiant with delight.

"Wherefore this rapture?" I asked; "I thought your theatrical princess had expelled you from her presence."

"Ah, no!" he replied, "we must not censure the angel too harshly; I am to be favoured with an interview this evening, in which she promises to explain all that may require explanation; and the exquisite creature condescends to solicit my forgiveness—(*my* forgiveness! think of that, Jack!)—for aught that may have seemed mysterious in her conduct. Six o'clock is the hour of ecstasy—at eight she goes to the theatre."

"But let me understand you aright, Murrough;—this empyrean being twice refused you

permission to visit her;—you wrote to me so, and so, I presume, I am to understand you."

"She did," said Murrough, "but"——

"Nay, Murrough, I want no *buts*, no shadings, no softenings—I want to understand exactly how matters really are. Now, to me, there appears to be something so truly theatrical in this arbitrary style of alternate admissions and exclusions, that I shrewdly suspect more lies at the bottom than is seen upon the surface. What means did you use to mollify her obduracy?"

"I wrote to expostulate," said Murrough.

"Are you perfectly sure that you did nothing else? Was your perfumed billet wholly unaccompanied? Did it travel unescorted by a sparkling gem, a necklace, or an armlet of pearls, or a brooch of brilliants, or some such thing? Nay, don't falter, Murrough—I know how theatrical queens are to be wooed and won—you can't enjoy their smiles for nothing—you may as well make an honest confession to me, now."

"Why, Jack, since you press me so hard, I must confess that I begged her acceptance of a few trifling ornaments in a casket; but so far from being influenced by any such paltry consideration, she earnestly pressed me to allow her to restore them—she did, upon my honour! I'll show you her note—and she also says it had been her intention, for the last two days, to appoint this evening for an interview—the last two days, mind, Jack—*before* she got the ornaments, observe; and what have you to say after that?"

"Why, only that love will make fools of the wisest of us all. But I see there is no use in talking to you; so I shall say no more until I see the incomparable Angelina. I suppose there 's no objection to my accompanying you to tea at her lodgings?"

To this Murrough could not object, as the coy princess always made it a point, with great parade of prudence and propriety, to avoid tête-à-têtes. When we went in the evening to her lodgings, I could not but acknowledge that

her person and appearance, in the fullest manner, justified Murrough's eulogium. She was exquisitely graceful.

She was sitting, as we entered, reading a religious work; and the air of slightly fluttered consciousness with which she received Murrough, as contrasted with the cold politeness that marked her reception of me, was incomparable acting, and plainly shewed the casket had not been without its effect. At tea, the loveliest hand and arm in the world were extended to reach Murrough his cup; a pearl bracelet adorned the well-turned wrist, and the expressive glance which the jet-black eyes sent forth, first to Murrough and then to the bracelet, was followed by an incipient sigh, managed so as only to agitate the snowy neck and bosom without escaping at the lips. The fair enchantress likewise imparted a slight degree of tremor to the hand with which she presented Murrough's cup; just enough to inform him that he possessed sufficient interest in her heart to cause a gentle agitation; an advantage

which, of course, it rested with himself to improve. It was altogether as finished a little piece of acting as I had ever the good fortune to see in my experience of coquetry.

" Murrough nearly bobussed miss O'Moore," thought I, " and now I'm confoundedly afraid the poor fellow will be bobussed himself."

Meanwhile the manager and his lady, who I thought were in concert with miss Truby, engaged me in a brisk disputation on the merits of singers, and actors and actresses, so that Angelina had all the advantage of a tête-à-tête with Murrough, while our presence preserved the appearance of rigid propriety. I kept my ears alive, however, to their conversation, and heard Murrough gently reproaching Angelina with having excluded him on one or two previous occasions on which he had requested permission to wait on her.

" Ah, Mr. O'Driscoll," she replied, " your exclusion arose from what I believe I must term a mistake on my part. Did you, or did you not visit mademoiselle Greützer, the Ger-

man singer, who is attached to the manager's company?"

"Indeed, miss Truby, I did not."

"I am convinced, Sir, that you did not. But I was credibly informed that you had visited mademoiselle two or three times, and under that erroneous impression I felt it my duty to refuse you admittance. I could not, consistently with my ideas of propriety, receive the visits of any person who stood on terms of acquaintance with mademoiselle Greützer; for mademoiselle is understood to have been imprudent during her residence at Vienna, and I should feel my delicacy deeply wounded by associating with any companion of her's. In fact, I could not for a moment think of such a thing; the very idea is contamination; one cannot be too circumspect. But," she added, with a smile of admirably executed sweetness, "you stand acquitted of the imputation; and, therefore," (and Angelina's eyes modestly fell as she spoke,) "and therefore you are one of my most welcome visitors."

"I would try to thank you," replied Murrough, "for this unmerited distinction, if it were not that language is cold and dead, and utterly incompetent to convey my emotions of gratitude—O! that I were permitted to name another feeling."

"Since language is incompetent to the expression of feeling," said Angelina with an insinuating smile, "suppose we try music;" and she gracefully rose and seated herself at the harpsichord. Murrough hung over the instrument, enamoured of the fair performer.

I was inwardly smiling at miss Truby's explanation of the motives that had led her to exclude Murrough; the immaculate, the frigid, the transparent purity that shrank from contaminating contact with any individual who had committed the unpardonable crime of visiting the Greützer; and I mentally marvelled at Murrough's undoubting acceptance of this prudish apology, when I chanced to turn over the leaves of a music-book that lay near a pile of others near the harpsichord, on the cover of

which was emblazoned "Angelina Truby." The first leaf presented the title, "A collection of Songs inscribed to the Cherokee Club." The words did ample honour to their title. I made no comment at the time on this discovery, and Angelina, after a beautiful extemporaneous prelude, sang, with infinite pathos and tenderness, the following verses:—

I.

"O, who can value maiden's love?—
It falls like morning's earliest dew
Sent from the azure fields above,
To gem the rose's blushing hue.
For maiden's love is true and bright,
Its home is purity and light.

II.

"Oh, who a trusting maiden's heart
Would wound with falsehood's bitter sting?
Or who the cruel pang impart,
Of cheerless, hopeless suffering?
For maiden's love is true and bright,
Its home is purity and light.

III.

"The maiden once betray'd, no more
On man's fidelity relies;
Nought can her mental peace restore,
She droops, she withers, and she dies!
For maiden's love is true and bright,
Its home is purity and light."

Angelina's voice was slightly tremulous towards the close of this song, and when it was ended she sighed deeply and cast her eyes on the ground.

"Enchanting!" exclaimed Murrough; "enchanting! Grant, have you no taste, no feeling?"

"The words of the ditty are lackadaisical enough," said I, "but the air is beautiful, and Miss Truby's singing is delightful."

Murrough took the music book and read aloud, with the most impassioned emphasis, the concluding verse.

> "The maiden once betray'd, no more
> On man's fidelity relies;
> Nought can her mental peace restore,
> She droops, she withers, and she dies!"

"Poor devil," ejaculated I.

"What!" exclaimed the Angelina, bending on me a highly finished glance of reproach; "are you an advocate for infidelity in love?"

"Certainly not," miss Truby, replied I, placing the songs of the Cherokee Club on the

instrument before her. "As Mr. O'Driscoll appears to have taken possession of the other music book, allow me to replace it with this."

Miss Truby proceeded to open the book with an air of the greatest simplicity and artlessness, but rose with inimitable dignity and indignation when the name of the first song, which was presented to our view, rendered it but too apparent that the book would have made an appropriate offering at the Cyprian shrine.

"This is some infamous trick!" she exclaimed, appealing to the manager; "I cannot possibly conceive how such execrable things as these have found their way among my music—it is really infamous—infamous!" and Angelina, greatly agitated, burst into tears.

"Your music has been all lately bound," said the manager's lady, coming to Miss Truby's assistance.

"Yes," replied the sobbing Angelina, "and I am certain that the odious binder must have mixed up these vile things with my music by

mistake, oh! I am so—so shocked and horrified! Pity me, madam! pity me, Mr. O'Driscoll!"

The appeal for pity, enforced as it was with the most seductive glances and the most silvery tones, was not thrown away on Murrough. "Pity you!" he echoed in the softest accents, "the heart were harder than adamant that could refuse you its sympathy, Miss Truby!"

"Oh dear, thank you, Mr. O'Driscoll—you're a person of candour and discernment—it was so shocking! but indeed it overpays me for all, to find that I possess your good opinion! It was *you*, Sir, she continued," addressing the manager reproachfully, "it was *you*, Sir, who recommended me that German bookbinder, Kaisenstern."

"He was recommended to us," said the manager's lady, anticipating her husband's answer, "by his countrywoman, mademoiselle Greützer."

"Ah, there now," cried Angelina, "that explains the mystery.—I'll venture to say that

those infamous songs belong to Mademoiselle, whose acquaintance I have always made it a point to avoid. How the innocent may suffer for the offences of the guilty! But it is more than a sufficient consolation to my outraged feelings to perceive that I possess your just construction, Mr. O'Driscoll, and yours too, Mr. Grant."

I bowed, being infinitely too polite to insinuate the slightest dissent from the lady's rather unauthorized claim on my favourable judgment.

"I shall scarcely be able to appear to-night," said she languishingly, "after the agitation of mind I have suffered from this shocking occurrence, but I must try at all events. It is eight o'clock—I must bid you adieu, as a sedan waits to convey me to the theatre."

We took our leaves at this signal of dismissal. "Well, what do you think of her?" said Murrough when we had got into the street.

"That she is an accomplished"——

"An accomplished what?" exclaimed he impatiently.

"An accomplished adventuress," said I; "and if you lose no more than the casket of ornaments by her, you'll be cheaply rid of her."

"Horrible profanation!" said he, "I would defend her angelic purity with my life."

"My dear Murrough, pray do not fight *me* about the lady at all events. Pray how much may the ornaments you gave her be worth?"

"The jeweller's bill was for £300," he manfully replied, "and I never paid a bill in all my life with so much pleasure."

"Oh mercy! what insanity! it is only to be equalled by her brazen audacity this evening in denying the ownership of the Cherokee songs, and wanting to fasten them on the poor Greützer, who is, I dare say, a much more reputable sort of person than the fair Angelina herself, which I strongly opine she might easily be without having any superfluous purity to boast of."

Murrough warmly repelled my attacks on his mistress's fair fame, and the keen encounter of our wits had not ended when we reached the House of Commons.

"Ha! my man," said he, "you must keep to the gallery or lobby — you cannot follow me into the *penetralia*—you have lost the 'open sesame' whose magic influence uncloses the senatorial portals—I go to wage battle against Hutchinson, and Toler, and Hobart, and *id genus omne*." So saying, he entered the house.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Ach! mein Herr, where is poor little Schneiderkin? Paf! the juggler has conjured him into the eggshell! O, what a clever shentelmans is Mynheer Huyderkooper! Break the eggshell, mein Herr—ach! softly, softly! paf! the poor little Schneiderkin pops out again, all covered with the yolk!"

THE JUGGLERS.

PROCEEDING to the gallery, I met lord Kilmoyle in one of the avenues of the house.

"Ah, Grant, my dear fellow," quoth his lordship, "who would have dreamt of meeting you here? I had supposed you were in the country."

"So I have been, my lord, for several months: I only returned to town yesterday."

"Well, and I suppose it is a lurking desire to re-enter the honourable house that leads you to haunt its environs?"

"Nay, I cannot say I should be disinclined to enter on the busy scene again if opportunity offered; at present, however, I have come in the humble capacity of a mere spectator."

"Although we have not the advantage of your senatorial services," continued lord Kilmoyle, "yet we are soon to have a namesake of yours in parliament for the borough of Garrydangan—a Mr. John O'Brien Grant, who is nominated to the vacant seat by lord Ballyduff, the patron of the borough."

"Indeed! I did not know I had a namesake bearing all my Christian names. And pray, my lord, who is this other Mr. John O'Brien Grant? Can he be any relative of mine? I never heard of him."

"I do not imagine he is any connexion of yours. It is rather singular to find a duplicate of such a name, for John O'Brien Grant is rather an uncommon compound. One would not wonder at five hundred William Smiths or Peter Thompsons. This Mr. Grant is an Englishman by birth; he is very young, having

barely attained his majority: he has been hitherto at Eton, and next week he comes over to take possession of the borough with lord Ballyduff's credentials in his pocket. When I first heard the story, I imagined that *you* were the person in question; and I felt, as you may suppose, extremely surprised, knowing the wide difference between your politics and lord Ballyduff's."

"The borough of Garrydangan is in Munster, I believe?"

"Yes—in the southern extremity of the county Cork; it is a small fishing town."

"My English namesake—when does he arrive in the borough?"

"On Saturday week."

"Are you quite certain?"

"Yes—I know all about his movements particularly well, as lord Ballyduff, who is a near relation of ours, has written to mention his plans to my father."

"Lord Ballyduff does not then reside in Dublin?"

"No—he is one of the lords of the bed-chamber—he lives in London."

"Do you think he will come over to assist his friend's election?"

"Oh no; he is too old and infirm for such a journey."

I questioned lord Kilmoyle again on all the points of his information; and when he was gone, I sat down and mused on the best mode of turning the affair to my own account. In the midst of my musings Murrough re-appeared in the lobby.

"Come here," said I; "I have just heard a piece of intelligence which furnishes materials for as neat an exploit as ever entered our brains. An opportunity offers of re-entering parliament, and I am resolved, with your assistance, to avail myself of it."

"To be sure, you shall command my best assistance, you old devil, but what opportunity has offered?"

"Now listen," said I, "and confess it were sin to let it slip. There is an old foozle of a

lord, the earl of Ballyduff, who lives in London, and who has determined on nominating to his vacant borough of Garrydangan a young Etonian spooney, who, by the singular grace of Fortune, happens to bear precisely the same designation as your humble servant, John O'Brien Grant. Why such a piece of luck was never heard of! One would think dame Fortune had written M.P. on my forehead. Now, Murrough, all we have to do is to waylay my valorous namesake on his journey, and put him out of the way till all is over. You and I will go down to the borough accompanied by Peter Lynch. The cheat will never be discovered till too late, as our persons are totally unknown in that wild and distant district; Garrydangan is a fishing village at the southern extremity of Corkshire. And then Mr. John O'Brien Grant walks a second time into parliament, returned by the honest constituency of lord Ballyduff's borough. There are only twelve electors, so the borough is as close as sealing-wax, which not only increases the

facility of our exploit, but enhances the value of success on the present occasion."

This was precisely the description of adventure to fascinate the fancy of Murrough. There was so much in the nature of the scheme, in perfect unison with his inventive genius, so much to give exercise to his boasted felicity of expedient and dexterity of execution, that had I been a total stranger instead of his "beloved and patriotic relative," he could not have refused his assistance. The delight of our anticipated triumph actually seemed to expel Angelina from his head for a while. "How far from town is Garrydangan?" he asked.

"I can't exactly say—probably one hundred and seventy or eighty miles."

"We must go back to Galway first," said Murrough.

"For what?"

"To prepare our forces and bring them along with us. We must have a dozen stout Kilnaflesk or Glannatour boys, with Lynch or Lawlor at their head. It is only our tried and

faithful vassals we could possibly employ in such a business. They must be armed with pistols too—O! how I long for the shindy!

> 'Hark! I hear the sound of coaches!
> The hour of attack approaches—
> To your arms, brave boys, and load!'

I think we will give the Etonian a lesson he will not soon forget. You should print an address to the electors in to-morrow's papers, and forward it by post to Garrydangan. Promise to do wonders for their fishery."

"Oh, of course—I shall promise to work miracles for their cod fish and stale mackarel—I'll tell them I will pay such close attention to the fishery, that in a month's time after my return, every shrimp will be a lobster, and every cod a whale. But when shall we start for Glannatour?"

"In an hour, if possible," replied Murrough; "no time can be lost—we must encounter some unavoidable delays in marshalling and conveying our forces from Garrydangan."

In little more than an hour we were seated

in a postchaise, and speeding on our homeward route as fast as four horses could draw us.

"Poor Kilmoyle little thought what hell-broth he was brewing for his cousin's nominee," said Murrough, "when he told you about the Garrydangan politics. But thus it is, and thus it should be. Integrity and talent such as ours, should ever triumph over leather-brained and jolter-headed folly, bigotry, and incapacity. I think our young Etonian legislator will soon have a surfeit of the wild Hirish—pretty devil to send into parliament, indeed! a link in the chain of oligarchical dominion! but the people must and shall have entire control over the House of the People; and until that happy consummation takes place, we must only be content with ousting the oligarchs piecemeal, either by open war, as we did at Kilshindy and Galway, or by ingenious devices like the present."

We travelled all night, and slept soundly in our vehicle. About noon next day we reached Glannatour, and immediately held a privy

council, to which Lynch and Lawlor were summoned. It was decided that Lawlor should instantly select the recruits. I did not go to Kilnaflesk, and Lynch and Lawlor were both charged on their peril not to mention to my father the expedition on which we were engaged. In about an hour from Lawlor's departure, a prodigious hurraing, and trampling of brogues on the hall-door steps announced his return with "the boys," who, at all times ripe for fun, were outrageously delighted on learning that their *mimber* and O'Brien Grant required their assistance in a certain mysterious project, the nature of which was to rest undeveloped till the time of its execution should arrive. Their animal instincts led them to believe and hope that something pugnacious was contemplated; and it was with some little difficulty that Murrough could so far control their ecstasies, as to impress upon their minds the necessity of secrecy and caution. They were then committed to the care of the empress of the kitchen, old Poll Sullivan; who, not-

withstanding Murrough's senatorial dignity, still continued the only domestic at Glannatour.

Murrough then led me up stairs to a room, which, long and intimately as I had known him, I had never seen open before. Here we found a large supply of arms and ammunition. Swords, pistols, sabres, cutlasses and musquets were ranged along the walls; and on my expressing my surprise at the number and good order of his weapons, he briefly remarked that I was the only person who ever had been, or who ever should be admitted to his armoury; and that he requested as a favour I might make no comments, even to himself, upon its contents. He selected twelve horse pistols with sufficient ammunition, and then descended to the parlour.

"Lynch," said Murrough, "do you know where captain Moonshine is?" This was a significant soubriquet by which Murrough habitually designated the skipper of his smuggling lugger. Lynch replied merely by motion-

ing his hand in the direction of the coast. Murrough then directed that the skipper should be sent for, and in less than half an hour he appeared; having, in fact, been occupied in arranging some smuggled articles in the vaults, which, as we mentioned in an earlier part of our tale, were situated in the domain, not far from the mansion. He entered, chewing a quid of tobacco, and made a reverence to Murrough, not unlike the lurch of a two-masted brig in a stiff north-wester.

"Pray," said Murrough, "do you know a fishing village on the southern coast called Garrydangan?"

"As well as I know my own brig," replied the tar; "it 's often I landed a snug cargo at the cove of Dunbeacon, half a mile to the west of the town behind the wood."

"Right, captain. And how soon, pray, do you think you'd run the brig to Garrydangan with the wind we have?"

"Let me see—we should wait for tide—that 's nine o'clock to night—wind due north,

perhaps half a point from the west,—I think—let me see—I think she'd run it in sixty hours before the wind."

"Good—Well then you must know, honest Moonshine, we've a job in hand that requires some dexterity—we'll have some human cargo to smuggle back across the channel, and the thing must be handily done, d' ye mind. There may be an interloper or two to put out of the way—you will land them on some barbarous part of the Welsh coast and leave them there. And hark'ee — paint over the brig's name, lest the birds should chirrup, my good fellow—we must leave them no clue whatever."

The sailor expressed his obedience to all Murrough's behests. I then began to catechise him.

"Pray, captain Moonshine--(I beg pardon, but I happen not to know you by any other name)"—

"No harm's done, sir, but my name 's Ignatius Blake, at your service."

"Well, captain Blake, let me ask, are you well acquainted with the country immediately around Garrydangan?"

"I am, sir,—I know every foot of it, and good right I have; many 's the bale of tobacco and anker of brandy I 've put ashore, and lugged through bohereens across the country."

"Then you will be an invaluable assistant. You know the road, I suppose, leading from the Dublin side into the village?"

"I know the northern road; it 's the only public road going into the town; all the rest are mere bohereens."

"Because we'll have some business upon that same road, my good captain, and we wouldn't be the worse of a guide of our own; for, to tell you the truth, we would rather avoid the observation of the natives. On next Saturday week we'll have a job there that will want all the help we can get. We set sail, then, at nine to-night—you will have a fine live cargo —something over a dozen or so of us."

"We must send Lynch by land, though,"

observed Murrough; "he must hire the best chaise-and-four he can get in the city of Cork, when he gets so far southwards, and time his movements so as to be within twelve or fourteen miles of Garrydangan, on the northern road, at ten or eleven o'clock on Saturday morning —he must then move on at a snail's pace and keep on the outlook, for this English candidate for Garrydangan may travel either by day or by night for aught we know. By that time some of us will be in the neighbourhood, to be in the way of a whistle; and if the day grows late without his arrival, we will lurk near the road till we hear the rumble of his wheels, and then—may heaven help him!"

Our remaining arrangements were speedily completed. Lest the wind might change, we determined to set sail that night, in order to have made as much way as possible ere the critical time should arrive. The weather was mild, and our passage moderately good; and sea-sickness did not prevent our round dozen of trusty democratic adherents from paying due

honour to the plentiful sea-store that Murrough provided. On the evening of the fourth day, we stood out in sight of the town and bay of Garrydangan; and we saw distinctly the road by which the Etonian was destined to approach the borough. As Saturday had not yet arrived, we employed the interval in sailing round the bay and enjoying the delightful scenery which every part of the coast presented. Chains of high brown hills indented with numerous ravines, whose recesses sheltered many a romantic oak-copse, rose from the water's edge. The village was situated in a hollow between two steep mountains, and was divided from the beach by a large green meadow, in the centre of which a small church-yard was enclosed with a low white-washed wall, which contained within its circuit several aged oak-trees, above whose broad and moss-grown tops the spire of the village church ascended. The whole scene wore the character of the utmost loneliness and wildness.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"*Hermooge.* Ach! Schneiderkin, why did you let mynheer Huyderkooper cram you into the eggshell?

"*Schneiderkin.* Because I had no help for it, mein Herr; the rugged monster swore he would kill me an I didn't let him."

THE JUGGLERS.

THE important Saturday arrived. We got ashore at the sequestered cove of Dunbeacon, and proceeded landward through the hills under the guidance of the captain. We ranged for several hours along the wild and lonely tracts of heath without meeting a human being; one of our party occasionally advancing to an eminence from which the northern road could easily be seen, but as yet there was not the slightest appearance of the expected equipage. As night darkened, we grew bolder, and approached closely to the road, which was quite

undivided from the heather by any attempt at a fence. We were not very long in its vicinity before the rumbling of wheels became audible, and a carriage approached at a leisurely pace, the charioteer of which I recognized, despite the darkness, as our confederate, Peter Lynch.

"Halloo! Peter! hollohoicks, my old boy!" exclaimed Murrough; "pray don't give your friends the go-by." Lynch pulled in, on hearing the well-known voice.

"I see you're at your post, Mr. Murrough, with your merry men all. You are just in the very nick of time. The Englishman's carriage will be here in an hour or less—I've had my eye on him since yesterday—he slept in Bandon last night, and I found out at the stables of the inn there that he was to leave it at noon to-day, and to smack into the borough to-night. I slept last night in Bandon, too—I left it at seven this morning."

"You had better wheel your chaise off the road upon the common behind that thicket," said I; "we may have a skirmish, and it would

otherwise be seen in the pistol flashes, and it would look suspicious to have it standing on the road while we are robbing my English namesake." Lynch instantly complied with my suggestion. "But in the name of wonder," continued I, "how did you get rid of your postillion?"

"Let me alone for that," answered Lynch; "I selected the mellowest fellow in the stables, and when I had him in Bandon this morning, I made him as drunk as David's sow—he wasn't able to stir, I promise you; so, when I had him fairly floored and stiffened, I mounted the box and drove away myself, and here I am as ready for service as ever."

"Capital," cried I; "and now, boys, we'll tie the black crapes on all our faces, for time is running short." As I spoke, the sound of a distant equipage was heard—it grew louder and louder, and our men, with blackened faces, ranged themselves on each side of the road, to intercept the progress of the carriage by seizing the bridles of the horses. The anxious moment

soon arrived, and the men, with a simultaneous exertion of activity and strength, seized the bridles of the four horses which drew the carriage, in spite of the menaces of a feeble and effeminate voice from within, which faintly threatened to shoot them if they would not desist. The postillions plied their whips manfully; but our forces were prepared for this description of resistance: to cut the traces, dislodge the postillions from their saddles, and pinion them, was merely the work of a minute or two. Another voice now spoke from the carriage, and united in the threats of the first speaker. I opened one door of the vehicle at the same moment that Murrough opened the opposite one; a pistol was protruded from within, but I screened myself behind the pannel, and made a sudden and violent effort to seize the weapon. I nearly succeeded, but it went off in the struggle, shattering the glass. I then presented my pistol (which was charged with blank cartridge) at the gentleman who occupied the near side of the carriage, and

demanded his purse. My object was to try if he was unarmed. He proved to be so, for he instantly offered to surrender his purse if we forbore further violence. As for my English namesake, terror had almost completely unnerved him. He offered no resistance whatever to Murrough, who was playing the highwayman in admirable style at the opposite side of the carriage; but he pleaded in faltering accents for a violoncello and a dressing-box, and a case of real attar of roses, which were stowed in some part of the vehicle.

"Oh, to be sure! my young master, (or miss, I believe I should call you, for you have not the pluck of a chicken,) all your devil's trumpery shall be perfectly safe, if it 's no better than fiddle-strings and smelling-bottles; but we must take the freedom of examining your trunks and pockets first. Here you—Newgate Bill! you blind blood of a gallows-bird! here, I say! heave out this ladylike young gentleman and send Bilking Isaac to

cut down the black Peter! make haste, confound you, you shambling, misbegotten whipper-snapper broth of a baggage!"

Meanwhile, Lynch and I forced the Englishman's companion out of the carriage, and after an obstinate resistance, succeeded in binding him hand and foot.

"Ruffian!" he exclaimed, "you may take my life now, if you like."

"Captain," said I, with an air of nonchalance, "shall I frummagem the covey?"

"Um — why no," answered Murrough; "be satisfied with grabbing the yellows. I'm jigger'd if ever I quenched the vital spark when I could help it."

"I hear the goldfinches chirping in his gropusses," said I.

"Grab them then," said Murrough, "and don't patter.

"Good Sir! valorous Sir!" exclaimed the Etonian to Murrough, in tones of the most exquisite misery, "spare my life, Sir! O, spare

my life, and don't soil or tear my clothes, Sir. O, spare my life, for pity's sake, and don't poison me with this stench of tobacco!"

"Stow your gammon," growled Murrough, or — blow me tight, but I'll tip you a belly-go-fister that will make cag-mag of your anatomy. Halloo, Newgate Bill! A pig's whisper with you!"

"Here I am, captain," said Moonshine, approaching.

"Tip Frumper* and Spooney* the gallop, along with the other leash of pippins, and if they offer to patter, make bow-wow-mutton of them."—Accordingly, the two postillions, the late occupants of the carriage, as well as a servant who had sat behind, and whom some of "the boys" had secured during the struggle, were now placed on palanquins formed of sail-cloth fastened to poles, and slung on men's shoulders. We had provided ourselves with this mode of carrying off our

* In *flash language*, "Frumper," implies a stout fellow; "Spooney," or "Yokel," a milksop.

captives to the brig in compliance with Lynch's advice, who foresaw its utility, and the ease it would afford us of disposing of the ill-fated travellers. When the captives, under captain Moonshine's escort, were fairly on their way to the brig, Murrough triumphantly danced, and snapped his fingers, exclaiming, "Cock your leg and cry 'Sugar,' my kiddy! I think I'm the boy for a bobbery. By jingo, Jack, we're as right as a trivet — we may bag the swag, and tipple our diddle now as fast as ever we like." We next repaired the broken traces of their carriage with whipcord, in an effectual though clumsy manner, mounted Lynch on the coach-box, and turning the horses' heads northward, desired him to drive away to any town save those where the equipage had halted on its southern journey; and we left it to his ingenuity to frame a suitable tale. We then got into the chaise and entered the borough about eleven o'clock at night. Murrough had detained two of the most civilized of our "boys" to officiate as servants out of livery.

On our reaching the wretched little inn of the town, it was instantly rumoured, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, that lord Ballyduff's friend had arrived, and five or six of the electors immediately waited upon us. Murrough presented me as Mr. John O'Brien Grant, which was all the introduction apparently requisite to secure my return for the borough; for all our visitors seemed influenced alike by a dutiful and servile obedience to the presumed will of their patron.

"And how is the good old lord?" demanded one of our voters, a Mr. M'Cormick.

"Very well, sir, thank you; and I'm sure that he would feel highly gratified if he knew of your kind inquiries about him."

"Oh, sir, you're quite too good to say so. I hope that his lordship's well paid for his troublesome post about the king—he is one of the lords of the king's bedchamber, is not he, sir?"

"Yes, sir—he occupies that post."

"'Faith, if I was a lord, I think I'd let the

king get housemaids to make up his bed for him—though it's not for me to say what great folk should or ought to do. But, indeed, I'm of opinion that it can't be a very pleasant business for a nobleman."

"Oh, Mr. M'Cormick, his lordship does not make the beds himself; he only sees them shaken out and aired, and scolds the housemaids."

"That was a grand address of your's, Mr. Grant, in the Dublin Mercury, 'TO THE FREE AND INDEPENDENT ELECTORS OF GARRYDANGAN.' The compliment tickled them, Sir, of calling them *independent*—indeed, I may say, that they're all independent enough; for the poorest of them all, thanks to fortune and my good lord Ballyduff, has not less than from thirty to forty pounds a-year, one way with another. Oh, yes—no man can say we're not independent, for our landlord has put us above want, though, indeed, there isn't one of us that would not like to mend a little, if we could, and I hope, Mr. Grant, when we put you into Parliament,

that you won't forget us clean entirely. — There's a young slip of a gossoon of mine, Jerry M'Cormick, who has got as elegant an education as any man in Garrydangan, and I see, by the paper you sent us from Dublin, with your grand and beautiful address, that there's three or four tide-waiters' places now vacant. If you'd only say the word to Government, I'll engage you'd be easily able to get in my gossoon; and it isn't I myself alone, but the borough of Garrydangan that would for ever feel obliged to you, sir."

"I rather doubt my influence with government," said I.

"Tut, nonsense, man!" whispered Murrough; "promise every thing—but cautiously, mind—remember the bribery laws."

"But I keep a book," resumed I, "in which I have a register of the names of all my friends in order to preserve them in my memory. But you know it 's against law for a candidate to make any definite promises—you understand me—I shall certainly enter your name."

"Oh, thank you, sir, thank you—I'm eternally obliged to you, indeed! and if you'd please to put me down now in the book for fear you'd forget it, you'd lay me under everlasting obligations."

"Certainly, sir," said I; at the same time entering his name in my pocket book, in a methodical, business like manner.

The honest elector burst forth into an ecstasy of gratitude, as if the entry were all-sufficient to secure the situation sought for. An example so seductive immediately produced the natural results on the other electors who were present, and I was beset forthwith by all of them with applications for places in the revenue, post-office, and in fact all imaginable offices. I cautiously replied to all, that I could make no promise of any kind, which the honest men's fatuity induced them to interpret in precisely the opposite sense; and they unanimously begged the insertion of their names in my list, with which request I most graciously complied; informing them at the same time that I

did so merely in order to retain in my memory the names of gentlemen who were about to lay me under so exceedingly deep and important an obligation.

The next day was Sunday; and as my election was now secure beyond all doubt, we kept out of the way of oratorical displays, and of every description of risk, which by the most improbable possibility could lead to detection. We strolled along an unfrequented beach when prayers were over, and when we had arrived at a spot which commanded scenery sufficiently sublime to harmonize with Murrough's emotions, he threw himself upon a grassy bank, and heaving a heroic sigh, exclaimed, "Oh, Angelina! would that thou wert here!"

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed I.

"Now, why this inveterate, unmanly prejudice against an innocent and lovely girl? Grant, you are really unpardonable! I have quitted the mistress of my heart, I have quitted the scene of my happiness, I have taken a

troublesome voyage, thereby delaying an important smuggling trip to Bourdeaux, and all to assist your views—and the grateful return I receive is a heartless snap at my beloved Angelina the first moment I open my lips about her."

"Because I am provoked at your thinking of a match so foolish and unprofitable. Besides, you must not claim any credit for having abstained from mentioning her name during our voyage, because you were quite too sea-sick; and sickness of any kind, more especially sea-sickness, puts a very strong quietus on a love fit. Indeed, I have heard of love being treated as a bodily complaint and cured as such; the love-sick swain being kept for three weeks on a low, light diet, and blooded occasionally. Now I think if you were kept quiet and well leeched, this feverish penchant might go off in a fortnight."

"The angel is so agreeable, so conversible!" said Murrough, as if thinking aloud, and wholly unconscious of what I had been saying.

"All women will talk," replied I; "the Persian sage says, the reason why men have beards and women have none, is because women could not hold their tongues sufficiently long to permit the operation of shaving, and their chins would suffer for it; but men *can* be silent when occasion requires, and therefore run no risk from the use of the razor. Ah, Murrough, you have been caught by beauty; and I should not object to that, if we could be sure that propriety and steadiness of character were its accompaniments."

"D—n you!" he hastily exclaimed; "your views are as sordid as if you had been bred in a counting house! I do believe you would marry the witch of Endor if her skin was as shrivelled as an old dried sheepskin, provided she had 'scrip and India bonds,' as your uncle Henry says."

"This comes well," replied I, "from a gentleman who was lately working heaven and earth to secure the embraces of the Miss O'Moores."

"Ah! I have since then become a convert

to a better way of thinking—Angelina has converted me—she is my patron saint—my guardian angel—her form occupies my waking thoughts, and seems to flit around my pillow at the drowsy hour of repose. Jack, I wish you were once well in love, and I should then enjoy some respite from your dogmatizing preachments."

"Why, Murrough, I have never been able to reconcile to myself the facility with which the dear creature diddled you out of three hundred pounds' worth of pearls and ornaments—it affords a very formidable earnest (at least in *my* unpractised apprehension) of what we may expect from the lady, should she ever acquire a more lasting hold over you."

"Is she not worth ten thousand times as much?" he eagerly exclaimed. "Can any testimonial be too great, of one's high admiration of such exquisite beauty and merit?"

"O, as to the beauty, no person can possibly differ from you. But then as to her merits—if you mean her merits as an actress, no doubt

they are considerable; the more so as no consideration whatever interferes with their fullest exhibition. I understand she was sublime in the *naked* scene in Midas."—

"Now that is a rascally calumny," cried Murrough indignantly; "and I wonder you can give one moment's credit to it."

"Why the Cherokee songs"—

"Pshaw! sure she proved to demonstration that she was totally ignorant of ever having seen them! I never saw any thing so expressive of innocence as her attitude and air. In fact, the momentary contact with those odious songs, only served to exhibit her innocence the more clearly. Could the indignation and astonishment of purity aspersed, have been better pourtrayed, than in the glance of her eye and the tone of her voice?"

"It was right good acting, no doubt," said I; "and it 's easy to see she has *done* you, my man—or, perhaps I should say, she has undone you. By the way, why did not you think proper to fall in love with her sister Celestina,

who was acting at Crow Street last February? I think she was handsomer than Angelina."

"What! is it the monstrous woman who married Ryder?"

"No—that was her eldest sister—Celestina is her youngest. Mrs. Ryder was known by the soubriquet of Elephantina, to which the younger Miss Truby has certainly no claim."

"Elephantina? why was she called Elephantina? I do not recollect that she had a proboscis."

"No, but her personal magnitude procured her the name. She has since, I hear, been separated from her husband—have a care of Angelina, Murrough."

"O, what perversion of ideas! to compare that creature of light and loveliness, that angelic being, to such a living mountain as Mrs. Ryder! Why, no man would like to be married to Mont Blanc or Chimboraço—they would be rather unwieldy and unmanageable brides; besides which, I understand that the proximate cause

of their separation was Mrs. Ryder's enthusiastic love of harmony."—

"A very strange cause for disunion," interrupted I.

"She used to dream of music," resumed Murrough, "and waken her husband by singing in her sleep."

"Now, my dear Murrough, while you are on the safe side of the wall, pray stay there; Angelina's nocturnal melodies might not be quite to your taste. I strongly surmise she would take an early opportunity of performing a very brilliant *notturno* in the style of the Cherokee songs. Do not trust her, Murrough. You are in love, and cannot judge for yourself, for the present at least. So you must be content to see things with the eyes of an impartial and disinterested friend. Upon my word, if I thought her a girl of character, I never should object to her want of connexion and fortune, though the stage is a very bad school for producing good wives."

Murrough was about to reply, when our

tête-à-tête was interrupted by the appearance of several persons, who strolled along the beach from the direction of the village. They proved to be the gentlemen of the borough who had waited upon us the preceding evening. They joined us, and entered into conversation on the subject of the Garrydangan fishery, which they earnestly begged to recommend to my senatorial care. I really became interested, as Mr. M'Cormick displayed some knowledge on the subject, and I listened with attention while he detailed the particulars of a whale chase which had taken place about ten days before along the coast, and in which both he and several other inhabitants of the town had been actively engaged.

"And did not the dangers of the chase deter you?" asked I.

"O, no—we're bred to the sea from our childhood, Mr. Grant, and it comes quite as natural to us as the land."

"You are amphibious, then, Mr. M'Cormick?"

"Indeed, sir, you'd say so, if you saw us on Wednesday week. Tom Mulligan's fishing smack and Barny Brannigan's sloop chased an immense shoal of the huge creatures to the harbour's mouth, about six in the morning. I was just getting out my sloop from the cove below, yonder, when the alarm was given by one Heffernan, a fisherman, who was the first to spy the matter out. In half a shake we had forty boats out, armed with all sorts of arms; and when we came up with the vessels at the harbour's mouth, we all made a half-moon of ourselves, and managed to gather the whales in the crescent, where we pelted them with stones and harpoons."

"It must have puzzled you," said I, "to preserve unbroken the semicircular form of your floating phalanx."

"In troth, it was a tight job enough, sir, and we never could have managed it if we hadn't had the luck to have some old hands among us. I won't say I was one of them. But manage it we did; for whenever our half-

moon was disjointed, the breach was always instantly repaired. We neared the shore by small degrees; the whales thought to bilk us once or twice, by running to westward, but the devil's in it if we were not cute enough for them. The boats kept advancing and retreating by turns, till at length we succeeded in driving the monsters on the beach below the town, and within a few yards of the big green monair*. You'd have laughed to see the comical capers the whales began to cut."

"I should think," said I, "it must have been no laughing matter to come within reach of their gambols."

"Not at all, sir. I never saw quieter, decenter behaved whales in all my life. Except where a fish became a little fractious and unruly while the boys were fixing the harpoon, or pulling the noose of a rope tight round his tail, the whole shoal was as sober as aldermen."

* Meadow.

"That's not saying much for their sobriety, Mr. M'Cormick."

"Well, I only mean that there wasn't any danger in approaching them. In five or six hours we had them all caught and towed off to Parson's Acre, where we sold them by auction, and we all shared the proceeds among us. It was the finest shoal ever driven here — three and fifty fish, and a dozen or so of them large ones."

"Have you often had similar good fortune?"

"Oh no, sir; the like of such a godsend was not known in the memory of man. In general, if two small whales are caught in three years, or thereabouts, it's the most we have to boast of. It isn't for want of fish, neither, but because of the roughness of the water. I'll explain to you, sir, the disadvantages under which we labour for this raison, compared with the folk engaged in the Greenland fisheries. The water in the Greenland seas is always calm, so the boats are quite

steady on the surface, and the harpooner, accordingly, is sure of his stroke. The whale bends down his head to plunge under water, which strains and tightens the skin of the monster, and the harpooner seizing on that moment to strike, the weapon pierces deep, which you know it couldn't do if the skin hung loose over the blubber. But in our Irish seas there 's always rough water from a swell or a wind, so the poor devil of a harpooner can take no aim at all; and the rogue of a whale seldom plunging under water, but lying at full length on the surface, his skin is loose and flabby over the blubber, so that the harpoon, though ever so forcibly driven against him, does not enter."

"Then how did you manage to secure your three and fifty whales the other day?"

"Why, because they tipped us a Greenland, sir. We got them into the smooth water where the men could take aim, and where the whales, deprived of the protection of the rough sea outside the harbour's mouth, thought to save

themselves by *backing*, as we call it, namely, plunging under water Greenland fashion; so they tightened their skin, and it was easy to harpoon them then."

"I think, Mr. M'Cormick, if increased force could be imparted to the harpoon, that the disadvantage of having to penetrate their loose and flaccid skins might be counterbalanced."

"Right, Mr. O'Brien Grant! Spoken like a member of parliament, sir!—and more especially like the member for a fishing borough. I protest and vow, sir, if I had a thousand votes in Garrydangan, I would give them all to you, sir. Why that's the very thing we want parliament to help us to accomplish. In 1763, parliament granted £1500 to Nesbitt, of the county Donegal, to help him in his projects; he gave increased power to harpoons and lances by discharging them from a swivel-gun, and succeeded to a miracle. And it is seldom, Mr. Grant, that the fish come nearer to the harbour than the other side of Scattery island; (if it wasn't for the haze, you could

see it plain from this;) so there 's no such thing as driving them into harbour, or catching them in smooth water."

"I can see Scattery quite plain through the haze," said I, "if that distant strip of land rising into two abrupt peaks be Scattery."

"You've wonderful eye-sight, sir," exclaimed M'Cormick in amazement; "that 's just the shape of Scattery, sure enough, and I can't see a wink of it now, no more than if it was a thousand miles off."

"I should like to visit it," observed I; "it seems a wild, and, I dare say, is an interesting place."

"Why, as to wild, sir, it 's wild enough, for the devil a thing does it produce except heath and moss among the rocks; and, as to interesting,—why, if a man was given a good interest in establishing a fishery there, *then* I don't doubt but it might become interesting enough. But nobody takes any interest in it now; and good reason why, there 's nothing to be had there, barring naked rocks and sea-gulls." It

was evident that M'Cormick had never heard the word "interesting" used in the meaning to which the more sentimental and romantic members of society are wont to apply it.

"I only meant," said I in explanation, "that I thought it might contain some interesting scenery or ruins."

"There 's a ruined church and castle on the south-west corner of the island," said M'Cormick; "but if I had a fishing station there, I would much rather see some interesting cod-fish or herrings, that would make the coppers dance in a man's pocket—which old stones and mountains never would do, under favour, be it spoken. Interesting!—'faith, we'd soon count interest and principal both, if a good snug fishing station was established by some enterprising body on the south side of the island. With a little parliamentary assistance, I shouldn't care to be the man myself; though, if it be true, that a burnt child dreads the fire, I have more reason than most folk to keep clear of Scattery."

"Why so?" demanded I.

"Because it once so happened that the island was nearly the death of me. There 's a huge warren there all full of rabbits—our parson says, that if every *burrow* in the island returned a rabbit to parliament, the honourable house would never hold them all. Well, sir, it is now nearly twenty-five years since, being a wild adventurous slip of a lad, myself and Joe Brannigan, (ould Joe, that 's Barny's father, sir,) went off in a sail boat to the island to shoot rabbits, on a fine November morning. Well, we hadn't been an hour there, when, lo and behold! the most violent storm of wind, hail, and rain I ever remember, came drifting from the west against us. There was no such thing as returning to the main land, for the sea was mountains high, and every wave you'd think would swallow up the island. We hadn't even the shelter of the church and old castle, bad as they were, because, as our misluck would have it, we were on the north side of the island. So we got behind a rock, and shifted

as well as we could to make an awning with our sail, or rather a sort of tent, with the mast for a pole. The night came, and there we had to stay, for the storm never sunk in the least,—the next day came, and there we were, cooped up as tight as ever, the rain pelting, and the sea roaring and bursting round us in spray and foam. Well, sir, day after day, and night after night, there we were imprisoned for no less than a week, and our friends on shore all gave us up for lost."

"How did you manage to support yourselves on the island?" asked I.

"By shooting rabbits, sir. By good luck we had ample store of powder, shot, and flints, and there were several particles of spars and fragments of timber thrown up from old wrecks, and we struck a light with our flints in dry sea-weed, and made a fire of these, and made shift to cook our rabbits well enough. But, when the storm at last sunk down, we were so weak we could not manage the boat, and had

to wait until our friends from the village came in search of us."

"Upon my word, Mr. M'Cormick, you and your friend had quite an adventure; you were actually playing Robinson Crusoe in a small way. But tell me, pray, who is that respectable looking old gentleman in black who is walking slowly towards us on the beach?"

He turned, as I spoke, towards the direction from which this personage was advancing. "That's our parish minister, sir,—the reverend Mr. Fitzgerald—as good and charitable a man as lives, sir, and as keen a sportsman. If he was a papist, I believe he'd make a patron saint of any man that banged well at grouse and partridge."

"The wags here tell a story of him about that," observed Brannigan, (another of the electors who formed our party;) "they say that he cares more for his little pack of beagles than for his entire kith and kin besides, to say nothing at all of his flock. It was told of him,

that once when his family were all lying sick of a fever, a gentleman of his acquaintance met him one day upon the road, and asked for his children. 'They're pretty well, sir, thank you,' said the parson carelessly. 'Well, doctor, how is your wife?' 'She 's middling, sir,' answers the parson again, as if he didn't much care how she was. 'Well, doctor,' says his friend, 'how are the beagles?' 'Oh very well, very well, thank heaven!' cried the parson, eagerly seizing his friend's hands; 'my dear fellow, you'll come and dine with me—you positively must,' says he,—'and I'll tell you the whole story of a beautiful hunt we had upon the side of Slievenadangan yesterday.' That 's the way to unlock the parson's warm heart, Mr.. Grant: touch him on his dogs, and say you've heard of their fame so far away as Dublin, and I'll warrant he will worship you."

"Now, Barny," said M'Cormick, "you only tell these stories of our parson to please your wife, because she is a papist." This was pronounced in a low tone, as the subject of our

conversation had now reached us. He was introduced to Murrough and me by M'Cormick, and instead of the uncouth hedge-parson we had been led to expect, we were agreeably surprised to find him a person of extensive information and excellent breeding; and what pleased us more than either qualification, inspired with an ardent attachment for his country. He invited us to dinner at the glebe; an invitation which we frankly accepted.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"A parish priest was of the pilgrim train,
An awful, reverend, and religious man,
His eye diffused a venerable grace,
And charity itself was in his face;
With eloquence innate his tongue was arm'd,
Tho' harsh the precept, yet the people charm'd."

DRYDEN.

Our reverend entertainer informed us of several circumstances connected with the local affairs of the borough and its neighbourhood.

"The landlord of the district," said he, "you are of course aware, is a constant absentee, which in some degree interferes with its prosperity. Nevertheless, thanks to the industry and enterprise of the inhabitants, many of them have realised a comfortable competence. I must say, however, that in numerous instances, they have done so by smuggling,

for which our rough coast affords unusual facilities; I could wish they had adopted some more legitimate means of making a fortune."

"Perhaps they could not," said Murrough, "as their landlord, whose protection, encouragement, and expenditure ought to have assisted them, has thought proper to withdraw these advantages, and to leave them to shift for themselves."

"What an unnatural system is absenteeism!" observed the clergyman; "we are fortunate, however, in its great diminution throughout Ireland of late years. This fortunate change, we may attribute to the free constitution of 1782—that glorious work of our immortal Grattan. A free parliament is the natural and legitimate sphere of the nobleman or gentleman's ambition; it is the focus of healthy political power. Plant such an institution in a country, and all, or nearly all those persons whose property gives them a stake in the land, or whose talents, or virtues, or ambition induce them to take part in the active scenes of poli-

tical life, will flock around the centre of power, and therefore RESIDE in the country, for the purpose of strengthening their connexions and increasing their interest. Such a parliament renders it worth a man's while to stay at home; it furnishes an irresistible inducement. It is therefore, that since the year '82, our Irish absentees are comparatively few, and are every year becoming fewer; and when a solitary case of absenteeship *does* occur, (such as my lord Ballyduff's, for example,) the mischief is in a considerable degree counterbalanced by the prosperous state of the surrounding districts, which enjoy the parental care of their respective proprietors, and whose wealth affords a ready market for our various commodities, while their growing manufactures furnish ample occupation for our unemployed hands. Ah! there is nothing like having head-quarters at home; there is nothing so good as a free, resident legislature. *That* contains within itself the seeds of health—the well-spring of national prosperity. What though a lord

here and there may be an absentee, nine-tenths of them reside in Ireland. What though lord Ballyduff may be an absentee, the individual mischief is almost unfelt in the mass of the general expenditure and general prosperity; and parliament possesses the power of advancing our comforts and our interests, by its wise and parental assistance and encouragement. Sir, I am well satisfied with the growing improvement of Ireland. I could find no fault whatever with the state of our affairs, if the shades of sectarian bitterness which overcloud society, could once be finally dispelled."

"Then, sir," said Murrough, "you do not seek to proselyte the papists."

"No indeed," replied the clergyman; "I have no concern whatever with them, save in the friendly social interchange of benefits and kindly feeling. I don't see why I should —they do not belong to my flock, and they have an excellent pastor of their own. The priest and I are as intimate friends, and as much attached to each other, as if we were

brothers. I should consider him extremely unjustifiable, if he sought, unsolicited, to inveigle any member of my flock into *his* communion; and I know not what right *I* have to take a liberty with any of the Catholics, which I should not permit their pastor to take unresented, with the flock over whom I am appointed to preside."

"Are the Protestants numerous here?" asked I.

"They number something over one hundred; in fact, from their fewness, my pastoral duties are so light that I devote a good deal of my spare time to the healthful occupation of field sports."

"So I was told, this day," replied I, "by one of the electors—I think his name is Brannigan."

"Ay, that fellow is somewhat of a wag," said the parson, laughing, and at the same time slightly colouring; "and I'll warrant he spoke of me as a regular Nimrod, who neglected my pastoral duties to follow the hounds. But really I know not, when a clergyman has no-

thing else to do, and if he finds that active bodily exercise is essentially conducive to his health, why he should not take a gun in his hand, or keep a few couple of dogs, to give an animating interest to his exercise." I cordially admitted the validity of the good clergyman's plea.

"Pray now," continued he, smiling, "did Brannigan tell you that a gentleman once inquired in succession for certain ailing members of my family, and was answered in a very careless manner, until he wound up his inquiries by asking for my dogs; on which I replied with an anxious animation that evinced how much stronger was the interest they possessed in my affections, than that excited by my family?"

"Some story of that sort, I confess," answered I.

"And did he tell you," continued the parson, "that one Sunday I followed a fox-chase into the church, and up to the reading desk, with full tallyho and tantivy, and dressed out in my pontificals?"

"No, sir—he told no such story as that."

"Well, I am surprised that he did not; for they are both standing jokes of his, at my expense, and I scarcely need tell you they are equally veracious. But with a good deal of blundering loquacity and impudence, the fellow has some humour too, and has now and then said things one could not well help laughing at. He is a shoemaker, (or perhaps, if the state of that trade in Garrydangan be considered, I should say a *brogue maker*, to be perfectly correct;) and last year lord Garrydangan came over to spend a few weeks here, shooting grouse, and in order to make himself exceedingly popular with all his father's tenants, he gave liberal orders to the tradesmen in their several departments, as long as he remained. Brannigan came to take his lordship's measure for a pair of shoes that should defy the wear and tear of the mountains on his sporting excursion: his lordship's foot was remarkably long, and when Brannigan brought home the shoes, his noble customer put his hand in his pocket, saying,

"What am I to pay you for these, Mr. Brannigan?" Our Garrydangan Crispin grinned broadly—he was not able to let the opportunity escape, so *eyeing the immensely long foot*, and quite unabashed by the presence of the subject of his satire, he replied, 'Wisha, then, I'll charge your lordship nothing, if you'll only lend me the loan of your foot to measure some potatoe ground with, that I have in the bit of a farm at Dunbeacon.'"

"Was lord Garrydangan angry?"

"No, he is a good humoured soul, and laughed heartily at Brannigan's jest, though a saucy one enough. His lordship spent his time in this neighbourhood with me; the old family mansion was ruinous, and unfit for his reception. In fact, the quadrangle in front was long since converted into a farm yard, and cows, I believe, are foddered in the old baronial hall. But I know lord Garrydangan will come to reside here as soon as his father dies; and as lord Ballyduff is now extremely old, that time must soon arrive. He told me when here, that

he anticipated much satisfaction from the prospect of building a suitable mansion for the future abode of his family; 'Ireland,' said he, 'has grown quite too important to permit one to live out of it—powerful political interests are every day rising up on all sides; and unless I stay at home and take care of my own peculiar portion of the national concern, my influence will soon be sapped and undermined.'—Another proof this, Mr. Grant, of the natural effect of the free constitution of Ireland in bringing home the absentees. In fact, its influence is quite magnetic, and the reason is plain to the meanest capacity; Ireland has become the theatre of important political events, and her magnates, in order to secure their own portion of power, find it absolutely necessary to cultivate home and its connexions."

Our excellent host was rather more liberal in pressing his claret than our temperate habits required; yet he did not himself exceed the bounds of temperance. Murrough, who was quite a connoisseur in wines, from his long

experience of the vaults of Bourdeaux, praised the claret to the skies, and asked the clergyman who was his wine merchant.

"Indeed, Mr. O'Driscoll," replied the good man, "I cannot give you any information upon that point, for in truth I don't know."

"Not know! why, that is really singular."

"Not in the least," replied the parson, smiling; "under the circumstances, at all events. Cheap as claret is, it would not be easy, perhaps, for a poor country parson to keep his cellars at all times sufficiently full to supply the demands of hospitality; and it is a proof of the cordial feeling entertained towards me here, that, twice or thrice in the year, I find a hogshead of wine rolled up from the beach to my door. They pay a similar compliment to father Macnamara, the priest of the parish. Much as I disapprove of the system of smuggling," added he, laughing, "it is impossible not to acknowledge my own obligations to it. Come, gentlemen—fill your glasses—here is to a name we must all revere—my political

pole-star—my cynosure—HENRY GRATTAN—the liberator of his country." The toast, I need scarcely add, was duly honoured. We expressed a wish to enjoy a ramble along the sea-shore until tea-time, as the evening was delicious, and the long slanting beams of the western sun fell with rich effulgence on the large green meadow which the dining-room windows of the clergyman's house commanded.

"We'll ramble as much as you please," replied our hospitable host, "and drink tea with the priest, which I promise you both will be a treat—but first you must drink one other toast—Come," he continued, filling his glass, and pushing round the wine, "come, gentlemen—*you*, Mr. Grant, are about to be our member—I must enlist you in the cause of Ireland before we give you the commission—here is 'Eternal Independence and Prosperity to Ireland, and cordial union among all her inhabitants.'"

It was utterly impossible to refuse the parson's toast; and when we drank it off, the

worthy man, true to his promise, immediately locked up the materials of conviviality in an old fashioned beaufet, and taking his cane and shovel hat, led the way out of doors, but not through the passage, or hall, by which we had entered. He opened a side-door that led into a small verdure garden, laid out into grass plats, and containing, indeed, only the most usual kinds of flowers—pinks, wallflowers, and a few large rose-trees, from which the summer bloom had nearly faded; but all arranged with a scrupulous attention to symmetry and neatness extremely pleasing to the eye.

"This is my wife's elysium," said he, smiling; "*mine* contains attractions more substantial," and he opened a wicket leading into a neatly kept kitchen garden, well stocked with fruit trees and culinary vegetables, and surrounded with a strong close hedge of mingled holly, privet, hazel, and laurel, with here and there a rose-bush. Along the southern exposure of this hedge, was a cozy range of bee-hives; and from one or two glass frames in the central square of the garden, it was evident,

that his reverence aspired, in the season, to the dignity of melons. As the ground was sloping, the upper walks commanded an extensive view over the hedge at the lower extremity, and we paused to survey the vivid green expanse of the beautiful meadow already mentioned, the broad sheet of water beneath, enlivened with its passing sails, and the rugged bounding chain of hills at the opposite side of the bay, with their occasional ravines of oak and birch copse. The whole was lighted up with the cheerful evening sun.

"Is it not a lovely spot?" said the parson, striking his staff upon the gravel walk, and looking round him with an air of great complacency; "*hoc erat in votis*—and I may truly say, I am content with it. I have no uneasy aspirings after deaneries, or rich prebendal stalls, or giddy elevation—I have been blessed with enough for all my wants—my MASTER has been bounteously pleased to bestow on me enough for hospitality, enough to relieve the necessities of the poor around me, in which

task of charity, I am bound to say, I receive the zealous and efficient co-operation of my dear and worthy friend, father Macnamara.—O! is it not a holier thing for Christians to unite with heart and hand in the performance of those duties which the common creed of *all* enjoins, than to dwell upon their points of difference with a vicious pertinacity which can only tend to irritate the sore that it ought to be our leading wish to heal?"

It was impossible not to acquiesce in the sentiments of charity this excellent clergyman inculcated, and equally impossible not to admire the mild and Christian spirit that prompted his remarks.

He soon led us forth through a close rustic gate in which was a small wicket; we entered the meadow, and descending to the beach, were conducted by our guide into a lane over-canopied with large old hawthorns, that led, at the distance of little more than half a mile, to the house of father Macnamara. "Now observe," said the parson, "how the priest takes

me for a model in all matters of taste; you must know that he warmly admires and emulates the glories of my little elysium at the glebe yonder, and deeming me an infallible guide in horticultural affairs—see here,—he has imitated with great success the verdure garden, and his grass plats are as smoothly kept as mine—and look, his garden hedge has attained a respectable growth, except the hollies—he should have planted laurel, or some quicker growing evergreen. He has not been able to accomplish the melon-pit, so, I believe, he has given it up in despair—he got frames,—see how they lie there idle near the hedge. Let us enter the house—I can promise you a hospitable welcome."

The hall-door was open, and we unceremoniously entered the little parlour. The priest was not there, so we passed some moments in examining the books that occupied a stand of shelves at the farther end of the room,—"Thomas à Kempis," said Mr. Fitzgerald, taking one of them, in which there were several

passages marked with a pencil; "an excellent book, though written by an Augustinian monk. But why should not heavenly instruction descend as well on the calm retirement of a cloister, as on a glebe?"

I had engaged myself with O'Leary's "Essay on Toleration," and Murrough was occupied with "An Excellent Method of Preparing Flies for Fishing," by one Patrick Fitzpatrick, and printed by Andrew Crook, Skinner's Row, Dublin, 1708. "I fancy," said he, "that the priest is a bit of a sportsman as well as yourself, Mr. Fitzgerald,—at least his possessing this volume would seem to convict him as a brother of the angle."

"You are right, sir; there 's an excellent trout stream above the town meadow, from which I have known father Macnamara fill his basket in less than two hours. He and I have established a system of barter; we often exchange our respective commodities. He often sends me fish in return for game. But I wish he would make his appearance." And the parson im-

patiently rang a small hand-bell that lay upon the chimney-piece. An old woman appeared in a minute or two; her grey hair neatly turned up beneath the border of a snow-white cap.

"Nora, where's your master?" inquired Mr. Fitzgerald.

"He is gone to a sick call this half hour, sir."

"Will he soon return?"

"Not for a couple of hours at any rate, sir; it was to Donovan's house beyond Dunbeacon that he went."

"Ah, then we can't see him this evening," said the parson, with an air of disappointment; "so the best thing we can do is to return to tea at my house."

"I can get tea for you, gentlemen," said old Nora.

"O, never mind, never mind, my good Nora," said Mr. Fitzgerald; "these gentlemen prefer the walk, as the evening is so lovely." And forthwith we set out on our return to the glebe. "I am sorry," said Mr. Fitzgerald,

" that Macnamara was from home; he is not only a worthy and excellent man, but a highly amusing companion. You would have liked him much. Bred in France, his manners are wholly exempt from domestic rusticity, and his conversation is full of French anecdote. When influenced by the stimulus of congenial society, I know no person better calculated to ' set the table in a roar,' with his piquant and original humour, and innocent hilarity. And if it be any recommendation, he is also one of the best mimics in existence."

" A dangerous talent," observed Murrough, demurely.

" But the priest," resumed Fitzgerald, " never turns it to the purpose of personal satire; he invariably confines its exercise to the exhibition of national peculiarities, or the embellishment of some narrative whose *dramatis personæ* are unknown to his auditors."

We spent the remainder of the evening at the glebe, and retired to our lodgings in the village at an early hour, delighted with the

cordial hospitality of our reverend entertainer, and equally so with the charming picture of rural felicity and peace his abode presented; as also with the general enlargement of his views, their exemption from prejudice, and the ardent affection for Ireland and her interests, with which the good man appeared animated.

"Well, how like you Garrydangan?" said Murrough, as we retired to rest for the night.

"Of all things," I exclaimed; "and I am pleased in especial with the harmony existing between priest and parson—an example well worthy of universal imitation."

"Upon my word, Grant, I am quite enraptured with it; so seductive an example would almost induce me to become a parson, if I could only be sure of such a priest in my parish as father Macnamara."

"And it would almost induce *me* to become a priest," answered I, "if I could only be sure of such a parson in my parish as Mr. Fitzgerald."

"Well, suppose we *do* set up a model parish

of our own," said Murrough, " and I'll be the parson and you 'll be the priest."

" No, Murrough,—I will be the parson, and you shall be the priest."

" I swear *I* won't be the priest at all events," said Murrough, " for then I should resign my enchanting Angelina."

" D——n Angelina! I wish you were rid of her on any terms."

And with this cordial wish we resigned ourselves to repose.

CHAPTER XXX.

"O colder than the wind that freezes
Founts that but now in sunshine played,
Is that congealing pang that seizes
The trusting bosom when betrayed."

MOORE.

On the following day, which was Monday, the election took place. To us, who had been accustomed to the turmoil of popular elections, the edifying unanimity with which the electors all tendered their votes in my favour, was extremely amusing. In return, I could not do less than give them a speech; and as any allusion to politics would have been utterly misplaced upon such an occasion, the topics of my brief address were merely the beauty of their bay and scenery; the extension of their fishery; the salubrity of the air of Garry-

dangan; the excellent flavour of their turbot, with a sly allusion to their moonlight importations of Nantz and Cognac; some personal compliments to themselves, with a flattering assurance that were *I* the fortunate landlord of the district, I should deem myself too happy in having my constant residence among such a worthy, enlightened, and estimable generation of men. The whole business was over in half an hour; and as soon as I could command a solitary moment, I sat down to acquaint my father with the unexpected victory I had achieved. I judged that his surprise would be great on receiving a letter franked by his hopeful son; and as he was a lover of epistolary brevity, I despatched my information in as few words as possible. My letter ran thus:—

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"You will doubtless be astonished to learn that your son and heir is once more a member of the House of Commons. I have to solicit your forgiveness for taking this step

without your knowledge or authority; but I trust that you will not be implacable, when you learn that the whole election cost nothing but the travelling expenses. The Garrydangan electors were unanimous; there was not a dissentient voice among them—they all united in deeming me the only proper person to represent their respectable and independent borough. In fact, no competitor had the foolish temerity to appear on the occasion. I am just upon the wing for Dublin, and have only time to assure you that I ever am

"Your dutiful Son,

"JOHN O'BRIEN GRANT."

"Garrydangan, August 22d, 1794.

"P.S.—Murrough desires his respects."

As soon as our chaise could be got ready, we departed from Garrydangan, and returned by the shortest route to Dublin, without meeting an adventure worth recording. A petition against my return was talked of by lord Ballyduff's party, who, naturally enough, were in-

censed at the discomfiture of his lordship's nominee; but it ended in empty threatening, as there was not the shadow of a pretext for petitioning. It was strongly surmised that Murrough and I had headed the gang that attacked the Etonian's carriage and spirited him out of the way at so opportune a juncture; but as our men were faithful to their trust, and never divulged the secret, it was wholly impossible to procure the necessary proofs.

Miss Truby still continued to exhibit her attractions on the Dublin boards, and Murrough took an early opportunity to visit her. Ever watchful of his interests, I accompanied him, apprehensive that without my friendly care, his passion might betray him into some rash declaration. Arrived at her lodgings, we knocked at the hall door, which was open; and no servant appearing, we walked up stairs to the lobby that opened on miss Truby's apartments. The door of the back drawing-room was slightly open; that of the front room was shut. It was in the back sitting-room

that miss Truby had been in the habit of receiving our visits. We tapped, and receiving no answer, at length ventured to enter. There was no person in the apartment; but a looking-glass, toilette-table, and some dresses that lay near the fire, evinced that the fair enchantress had been recently performing the duties of the toilette there. Murrough pointed to a casket that stood upon the table; it was his gift; and as it lay partly open, it disclosed the superb and costly contents. A folding door connected this apartment with the front room; we were about to knock for admittance, when a few interrupted and impassioned accents from within arrested my attention, and I forcibly withheld Murrough's hand, which was lifted to knock.

"Surely," said he, "you would not descend to be an eavesdropper?" and he again tried to knock, but again I prevented him.

"Hush!" said I; "this is the critical moment of your fate—I'll lay my life there is a *scene* within—I insist upon your silence."

"This is treating Angelina basely," he replied, struggling to get free; but he was unable to escape my firm grasp.

"Now, do not be a fool," said I. "Hark! their voices are tuned to the softest modulations of the amorous cadence. Really this must be something worth peeping at—now be ruled by me for two minutes, and then do whatever you like."

Apparently I produced some effect upon his resolution, for he promised to be passive, and he kept his word, although he trembled violently with suppressed emotion. I looked through the keyhole: a large sofa stood in the centre of the room, occupied by Angelina and lord Grimsborough, who, pressing with deferential tenderness the fair one's snowy fingers to his lips, poured forth a hesitating eulogy upon her charms. The broken and impassioned murmurs, like the cooings of a turtle, that escaped his lordship, showed that his eloquence was scarcely improved since the days when we had heard it exerted on the hustings. I withdrew

from the keyhole when I had fully reconnoitred the lovers, and motioned to Murrough to take his turn of inspection. He did so, half reluctantly, yet irresistibly impelled by curiosity.

"D—n lord Grimsborough!" he exclaimed, in a tone of strong though suppressed passion; "I'll fling him out of the window."

"For what? is it because the celestial Angelina turns out to be a gay deceiver? No, my man! but thank your kind stars which have placed it in your power to recover the casket of ornaments which you gave the worthless, undeserving wretch. *I* should be eternally ashamed if you suffered such a noble opportunity to escape unimproved. Three hundred pounds' worth of valuable trinkets and jewels are no joke—there they lie—the coast is clear—put them under your cloak, and let us decamp. The lovers are engaged in an all-absorbing ecstasy of bliss, which we had better avail ourselves of while it lasts. If you do not take the casket, *I will*."

Murrough strongly compressed his lips, re-

mained undecided for an instant—then walked over to the table, deposited the valuable casket under his cloak, and quitted the house without encountering a soul upon the stairs or in the hall.

"Now," said I, "that 's a proper job. Well done, resolution! Murrough, I congratulate you upon the happiest escape a man can have."

A tear trembled in his eye. "I could have sworn," he said in faltering accents, "that she would not, could not have deceived me! Those trinkets, too—she took them, and she wore them—and oh! how supremely lovely she *did* look, the day they first adorned her beautiful person—they were pledges of my firm belief in her fidelity and innocence."

"And therefore," said I, "it would have been an unpardonable crime to leave them in the possession of treachery and guilt, when so favourable an occasion of resuming them occurred; I could never have reconciled it with my notions of honour or morality to ne-

glect such a famous opportunity! Keep the jewels now, to gem the brow of some deserving fair one. I protest, I think you ought to be in an ecstasy of gratitude and joy for your deliverance, instead of looking downcast and tragical. Leave the Angelina to the embraces of lord Grimsborough and the rest of the Cherokee Club, and thank your stars you're so famously out of the scrape. The night coach for Galway will start in an hour—we have not any business to detain us in Dublin, so I vote that we quit it without delay."

"You are right," replied Murrough with a heavy sigh that indicated a conflict of feelings; "I believe that the sooner I quit the scene of my delusive happiness and bitter disappointment the better."

And accordingly we took our places and set off; Murrough was gloomy and despondent the entire journey, and it was not until after we had been at home for nearly a week that he was able to resume his wonted equanimity.

Angelina advertised a reward for the recovery

of her ornaments in all the newspapers: the advertisement feelingly stated that the loss of the jewels was the more grievous to the owner, from their having been the gift of a dear and highly valued friend. But she advertised in vain.

" D—n her," cried Murrough, who had now sufficiently recovered from his love fit to treat the affair *en cavalier;* " d—n her, lord Grimsborough will more than make it up to her—I'll warrant you she'll wheedle him well—perhaps it was his lordship's assiduity that prevented her putting her casket out of our reach. Well, if this be so, I'm obliged to his lordship. D—n her, she's a treacherous little devil! D—n her, she 's an exquisite creature! D—n her, I'm well rid of her at any rate! Heigho!"

My father was graciously pleased to express his approbation of my recent exploits at Garrydangan. " It was really requisite," said he, " to retrieve your reputation after having been unseated; it was, upon my honour. And now I hope you'll look about in earnest for a wife—

I do assure you that you'll never do it *younger* —now is your time, upon my honour. I think you ought to hit off something good. What the d—l else did you go into Parliament for? *I* will make a handsome settlement."—("Thank you, sir.")

"Securing you £300 per annum; you will have *that*, and your M.P.-ship, and you're a devilish good looking fellow into the bargain—you are, upon my honour! so you need not look sheepish at hearing it, for I'll engage you know it very well without my telling you. And with all these advantages, I vow and protest you should get something as good as the St. Lawrence. I'd like too, to show her you could marry without her assistance."

"Really, sir," said I, "your generous kindness overpowers me, but I have not the slightest inclination to marry at present."

"Why, what the devil have your inclinations to do with the matter?"

"In some years hence, perhaps I may

begin to think of it, but I prefer remaining as I am for a while."

"And what, may I ask, is your reason for that sage resolution?"

"Only, sir," I replied, pausing for a moment to invent an excuse,—"only, sir, that my heart has suffered so much from the disappointment I sustained in not obtaining the hand of Miss St. Lawrence, that my feelings require some time to subside."

"Pshaw! nonsense! I did not suppose you were such a thorough-paced ass! I did not, upon my honour. Feelings! and pray when did you begin to experience these fine feelings? for I saw no traces of despondency about you ever since your disappointment, as you call it. Why, when you returned from Dublin after being unseated, you seemed in famous pluck—your spirits never suffered, I'll warrant—you ate and drank, and joined in all social amusements as usual—you had spunk enough to stand for Garrydangan, and to

get into parliament again—(I don't pretend to say exactly *how*, for I think there was a little foul play on the Etonian, if you'd own it—'pon my honour I do!) but all that did not look like a love-sick swain in the least, and it 's rather too late now to begin preaching about your fine feelings. So it is my will and pleasure that you lose no time in casting your eyes about for a wife, and the sooner the better; for, to tell you a secret, uncle Henry 's a slippery old salmon as ever swam in the Shannon, and he has fifty maggots in his head from morning till night—it is really impossible to say to whom he may take a frolic to bequeath his property; and I think if he saw a chubby youngster in the nursery to perpetuate your name, and to wind about the old man's heart, he would be much more apt to think steadily and rationally on the matter than he is at present, 'pon my honour."

"Well, but really, sir, it 's hard to think of

marrying without having fixed my affections on any one."

"D—n your affections; this is the romantic fudge that sets me mad! What the deuce need you care about your affections? it's all nonsense, I tell you—all nonsense. Young men delude themselves with this absurd and ridiculous folly until matrimony solves the delusion. Affections! d—n it, but you'd set a saint mad! Why all that sort of nonsense is utterly exploded now-a-days. Affections! why the peasants about us could teach you common sense on the matter. Look at little Mary Sheridan that was—did *she* care a curse for that red-haired, hump-backed, battered devil that she married? I'll warrant you the girl was no such fool; she married him because he had a purse full of gold, and was in the way of earning more. Affections, indeed! I desire I may never hear such folly from your lips again as long as you live. Not that I require you to pick out a wife that you must hate; all I want

you to do is to marry for aggrandizement, and let affection come after if it will. But no rational man ever thinks of putting it foremost. No one, in fact, but some sentimental love-sick mooncalf, some moonstruck booby, 'pon my honour."

My father took his hat and walked out, leaving me to digest his admonitions as I might.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"Nay, grieve not that I leave thee! Though I go
Unto that dark and unknown future where
Thou wilt not be to welcome me, yet there
Rivers of happiness for ever flow,
And God will be our glory! I shall be
Sheltered for ever from the world's cold blast."

EDMESTON.

THE period now rapidly approached which was to make me a father. To this event I naturally looked forward with intense anxiety, and it was with the deepest grief that I observed the rapid decline of Mary's health. A severe cold, to which she had neglected to apply the usual restoratives in its commencement, soon assumed the symptoms of fever, and her life became hourly more in danger. I feared the very worst; I often sat for hours by her side, and the poor girl would try to smile

away my manifest uneasiness, but her smile would subside into an expression of the deepest solemnity as the natural apprehensions of her situation would arise in her mind. Yet she seemed perfectly resigned to any result that might occur; and it was in those hours of gloom that I learned best to prize the worth and the affection of Mary. I could not avoid contrasting her with Murrough's theatrical figurante; and the contrast served to strengthen the abhorrence of vice I had ever experienced, even though presented beneath all the fascinating blandishments of grace and beauty.

"I do not wish to live," said Mary one day, "except when I think how sorry you will be after me—or when I think of our poor child, if indeed it lives to want the care of a mother."

I tried to reassure her.

"Don't think to comfort me by saying I will live," she replied, smiling; "God only knows whether I will or not; and I am quite willing

to go if he calls me. I cannot say I am sorry on my own account; but I feel extremely solemn when I look beyond the grave. I have nothing to depend on but God's mercy: however, that is a strong dependence."

Her frame of mind was happy and composed; it was such as her native strength of reason naturally led one to expect. The day at length arrived on which Mary gave birth to a boy ;—the reader will spare me the unprofitable pain of detailing my feelings—I repaired at an early hour to the cottage, and my wife and her infant both lay dead before me. It was a moment of unutterable bitterness. She, in whom I had treasured my heart and my soul, was now a corpse. She had passed to another state of being while our mutual affections were yet young and warm ; my day-dream of bliss was at an end—I had lost her for ever !

My father was deeply affected ; and in order to relieve Mrs. Sheridan from all possible care and annoyance, he took upon himself the sole

charge of the interment. "I insist," said he to me, "on your attending poor Mary's funeral. You would not attend her wedding, and you little thought *then* how short a time she might need any kindness at our hands. But you *must* attend the funeral."

"Indeed sir, I will; and I shall be chief mourner if you wish, for I can truly say, that there will not be a heart that regrets poor Mary more."

"That's right—I am glad to hear you say so. Poor, poor girl! my heart bleeds for her mother!"

The day of the interment arrived. I will not dwell upon the recollection, for I could not do so without reviving the bitterness of the hour when the earth was cast upon the coffins of Mary and her child. My best affections were entombed in that grave, and there they have ever since faithfully rested. I have passed through various changeful scenes; I have grown old and grey since then; but my heart has never, for one instant, in the long

range of years, transferred its love from the tenant of that tomb to any other object. I must close this brief chapter; for my feelings will not permit me to dwell longer on the sad remembrance.

CHAPTER XXXII.

" Is *she* forgotten, whose soft smile,
Once cheered the desert of my weary heart ?
Oh, no."

WEBBER.

Two years passed, during which my father incessantly urged me to marry. It was true that I had not now the same insurmountable reasons for refusing his request which had influenced me during Mary's life; nevertheless, I could not think, without repugnance, of entering again into the matrimonial state. His importunity prevailed, however, so far as to lead me to look out for a wife. The choice of the person was a subject of almost total indifference to me; for I felt that the world contained not one whom I could love as I had loved Mary. Lord Kilmoyle recommended my

attempting the romantic adventure of liberating Clara M'Neile from her imprisonment at Barrington Park; and, indeed, it seemed probable enough that the lady would reward such a service with her hand. But then it was a service of danger; for her uncle and tyrant, a man of the most ferocious disposition, had placed trusty guards in the house and in the lodges; so that no stranger could hope to effect his entrance undetected by those lynx-eyed outposts.

"Do try it," said Murrough, "and you shall command my best assistance—really, the effort is worth making; it is not every day that imprisoned nymphs hold out rewards to valorous knights; modern times scarcely ever present such inviting adventures; they belong to the days of hippogriffs and dragons. And Clara has ten thousand solid pounds—Oh, Jack! do not let such a famous opportunity slip."

"Why don't you take advantage of it yourself?" asked I.

"So I would at once, only that I am en-

gaged, as you full well know, in a love affair with Mrs. M'Gettigan, the brewer's widow—£1000 a-year and £16,000 in hard dry cash. I am going to visit my fair mistress to-morrow—you must come with me, Jack; you've been strangely hypochondriac, I think, this long time past, and you ought to try and raise your spirits."

I accompanied Murrough the following day to the abode of his widow. He was working heaven and earth to obtain possession of her hand; and by an adroit application of his almost intuitive insight into human character, I thought the expert tactician had every prospect of success.

Mrs. M'Gettigan was a fat, blowzy woman, with an expression of mercantile keenness and intelligence in her small grey eyes: she had not the most distant pretensions to beauty; but Murrough was *now* past the days of inexperienced folly, and it would not have been easy for a second Angelina to ensnare him.

He had, at this period, been paying Mrs.

M'Gettigan assiduous attention for upwards of six months, and he found her, for some time, exceedingly untractable. Whatever might be thought of her abundant person, her heart, at least, was utterly unconscious of the melting mood: and Murrough quickly ascertained, that notwithstanding the very handsome competence bequeathed her by her husband, no circumstance could give her greater gratification than the prospect of increasing her means by recommencing business with the aid of a competent and trustworthy person. Acting on this knowledge of the lady's propensities, Murrough applied himself with such diligence to the mysteries of boilers and mash-tubs, that ere long he acquired a goodly stock of brewhouse phraseology to act as auxiliary to the softer inspirations of Cupid.

However, it would not have been perfectly good taste to dismiss altogether the established evolutions of love; and, therefore, on our being ushered into her drawing room upon the day in question, Murrough advanced with an air

of the most tender and deferential solicitude, and taking her hand, which he warmly pressed, inquired in a tone of faltering emotion, if the cold that had threatened to affect her chest had nearly disappeared.

"It 's gone—quite gone, I thank you, Mr. O'Driscoll," replied the brewer's widow very graciously; "and I wasn't long routing it, I promise you.—'Stuff a cold and starve a fever,' as my poor dear M'Gettigan used to say, heaven rest his soul! I supped last night on Scotch collops, and I ventured on a little nice beefsteak, and a tumbler or two of stiff negus; I am quite well to-day, and the little nervous fit is gone entirely."

"I am truly delighted to hear it," said Murrough, with an admirably sympathetic modulation of his finely toned voice; "I thought every moment was an age since I saw you last, for I have felt extreme anxiety on your account. But I have cheering intelligence for you," he added with an air of confidential tenderness; "malt has got a fall of three shillings the

hundred. Pray have you been thinking since I was here of our little project?"

This project, I must inform the reader, was the formation of a joint brewing establishment at Glannatour, to which Mrs. M'Gettigan had been solicited by Murrough to contribute the greater part of the requisite pecuniary outlay. He undertook, on his own part to furnish the necessary buildings, stores, lofts, &c.; to which purpose he proposed converting the large and unoccupied range of offices at Glannatour. He was also to contribute his personal superintendence; on which head he had often undergone long and searching examinations from Mrs. M'Gettigan; whom his answers, it seems, had fully convinced of his fitness to embark in the concern. Murrough's grand calculation was this;—give him once the possession and management of a large sum of Mrs. M'Gettigan's money, and unite her once with himself in commercial copartnership,—do this once, and then the identity of their interests, their constant communication

with each other, and his own surpassing tact and great efficiency, would speedily convert the league commercial into the league matrimonial, and render the brewhouse the vestibule of the Temple of Hymen.

To Murrough's query Mrs. M'Gettigan graciously replied, that she had turned his project in her mind, and taking all considerations into account, she really did not see how she could employ a portion of the means poor M'Gettigan had left her, to better advantage than by setting up a brewery; "and I think," added she, "that you're a steady handy fellow that wouldn't let those rogues of clerks or brewers play tricks upon you—I could give you a hint there, now and then—one must have eyes before and eyes behind in a brewery —there's the brewer to be watched, and the maltster to be watched, and the clerks to be watched, for fear they'd cheat, and then there isn't a labourer from one end to t'other of the whole concern that won't want looking after now and then; and besides all that, there's

the gauger to be bamboozled as often as he comes—the *duty's* no small portion of one's profits on a tierce.—Ah, poor M'Gettigan! rest his soul! he was the man for sorting the gaugers! In the article of duty saved alone, he reckoned that he made at least five thousand pounds while he kept the concern. I could tell you many a good story about that —I'll never forget the lesson he gave Lawton, the English gauger, one day that he came peeping about."

"How was that?" demanded Murrough, with an air of the deepest interest.

"Why, I'll tell you how it happened.—Lawton, in the course of his inspection, asked M'Gettigan for the key of some part of the premises, where it wouldn't have been quite the thing to give a gauger entrance. M'Gettigan had just been tutoring Dick Cahill, our maltster, to the part they were to act. 'I haven't the key, Mr. Lawton,' says my poor dear husband, 'I gave it to the maltster this morning.' 'Call him,' says the gauger.

Dick was called, and hopped out of one of the vats. 'Where's the key?' says M'Gettigan. 'I haven't it,' said Dick, who pretended to be tipsy. 'You have, you rascal!' cries my poor dear M'Gettigan; 'you know I gave it to you, it isn't two hours ago.' 'I never got it from you,' answers Dick. On which my poor dear husband struck Dick, and a mock fight commenced. The gauger, in trying to separate the parties, got the devil of a pummelling from both, that knocked him up so much that he took to his bed for a week. You'd have laughed to hear my poor dear M'Gettigan describing how he and Dick Cahill pretended to aim their blows at each other, yet always managed to hit the gauger—ha! ha! ha!"

"Excellent! really excellent!" exclaimed Murrough; "that's one of the best stories I ever heard."

"There's one thing certain," said the widow, "namely, that any person who engages in a brewery, should be gifted by nature with a taste for the trade."

"I venture to think I possess that qualification in very high perfection," said Murrough. "I wrote an epic poem on a mash-tub, when I was only ten years old, which was greatly approved of by the best judges. But I feel happier than I can express, my dear madam, at your kind and flattering consent to embark in my little speculation.—I am gratified, because it affords me an opportunity of engaging in a profession for which I have always experienced a strong predilection; I am also pleased at the prospect of profit it opens to both of us; but I own I am particularly flattered and delighted," (here he took her hand, and sunk his voice to the most approved cadence,) "because it enables me to act in connexion with *you*,—a pleasure," he added with a sigh, "which a man must indeed be insensible not to appreciate. I shall lay in a large supply of barley this week, while it's cheap.—You have not an idea," he continued in a very insinuating whisper, "of the happiness your compliance has given me."

"Ah, you rogue, be quiet now!" said the widow, smiling, and slapping his face with a friendly familiarity, that intimated plainly the advances he had made in her favour. Murrough returned her encouraging freedom with a sigh, and a glance of the most intense and devoted admiration; a glance such as Murrough alone could produce, and which always excited my astonishment when I looked at such a very unpromising manufactory of glances as his twinkling and diminutive eyes. He took a tender leave of the widow, and when we left the house, "Now!" he exultingly exclaimed, "I've been working hard these six months to accomplish this object, and it 's only to-day I've succeeded. I thank you, Jack, for ridding me of Angelina—without you, I freely confess, she would have fairly bamboozled me—I think I shall soon give the pearl necklace and the diamond brooch to Mrs. M'Gettigan. She is worthy of them, if she was twice as fat and twice as red; it is not until after a man has had some experience of

the female world that he begins to be sensible of the worthlessness of personal attractions. Solid qualities outweigh them to the ground. If I do not, for example, happen to admire a steamy sigh exhaled from the capacious ruby of my widow's lips, I will think of the tremulous vapours that exhale from the latticed ventilator of my brewhouse; or, if at any time I feel disposed to question the perfect symmetry of her ample form, I will instantly turn my thoughts to the symmetrical rotundity of my boilers and vats; or, if a wayward criticism on the golden colour of her skin should obtrude upon my ruminations, I will immediately reflect upon the golden profits of the brewery, and bless the plump hand that furnished forth the necessary outlay which enabled me to set it going."

"Well, well," said I, "I have seen Cupid in many situations, and some of them sufficiently fantastic; but never till now have I seen him lurking in a mash-tub."

"Cupid," replied Murrough, "can repose

upon a bed of malt as comfortably as on a bed of roses. But, Jack, I fear that my new avocations will be nearly irreconcileable with my constant attendance in parliament. I sha'n't like giving up the honourable house."

"Well, if you can't be knight of the shire, you will at least be knight of *Malta*."

"D—n your puns! why didn't you say I might be member for *Beer*haven?"

Murrough lost no time, while the widow continued in the humour, in having their agreement legally drawn, signed, and witnessed; and the rapidity and judgment with which he completed all the preliminary arrangements for commencing this new and extensive establishment, were a proof, among numerous others, of the ease with which his powerful mind could grasp any branch of information to which he thought proper to turn his attention.

"Now," said he, "there never was brewery established under more promising auspices—the county *mimber's* beer and porter—Murrough O'Driscoll's liquor—*he*, the darling of

the people, and the castigator of their tyrants! Other people turn patriots because they are brewers, to ensure the sale of their beer—I turn brewer because I am a patriot, and know that my beer will therefore sell. Sell! I'll outsell them all—it 's no bad feather in my cap, either, to be associated with the widow of the old popular favourite—Sir, I think, when our names appear in print together, as joint proprietors of the concern, that she'll hear so much about me, and see so much about me, and be quizzed so much about me, and bothered so much about me, besides having her cash in my hands, that she'll marry me in spite of herself."

When the brewery was on the eve of working, Murrough announced his commodity in the following manner in the public journals, which I think would do honour to the genius of George Robins, the modern autocrat of puffing:—

"GREAT GLANNATOUR BREWERY.

MR. MURROUGH O'DRISCOLL, M.P.,

ever solicitous for the personal comforts, as

well as the political freedom of his countrymen, has, with an anxious view to their advantage and accommodation, associated himself with

MRS. M'GETTIGAN

in establishing the above concern for the manufacture of

ENTIRE.

This delicious, exhilarating, patriotic, and

DEMOCRATIC BEVERAGE

is entitled the

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION AND REFORM

Beer and Porter.

Popularity was never more deservedly conferred than on this beverage, whose unrivalled excellence would seem to realize the fabled

NECTAR OF THE GODS;

and is wholly attributable to the unremitting solicitude and skill of the above-mentioned

DISTINGUISHED AND PATRIOTIC PERSONAGES.

Terms, 21*s.* 6*d.* per tierce (for cash); 24*s.* for six months' credit.

N.B. A supply of hops and malt wanted."

Where is the female, with a spark of woman in her composition, whom such a manifesto as that would not mollify? It was worth a thousand billets-doux. Even Mrs. M'Gettigan, keen and business-like as were her usual habits of thinking, found its influence wholly irresistible.—Murrough's matrimonial calculations proved correct, and the widow accepted his hand. Happy dog! how he *did* exult when he first began to exercise hymeneal authority over the £1000 per annum, and the £16,000; the savings and scrapings of Mr. M'Gettigan's industry! Another person in his place would have probably relinquished the brewery, as soon as the grand matrimonial object, had, with its aid, been accomplished. But Murrough was no such fool. Finding that it prospered, even beyond his expectations, he resolutely set to work to make it as productive as possible. The large empty parlours at Glannatour were quickly furnished in a style which, as Murrough proudly boasted, nearly equalled the magnificent saloons of Corrin House in Dublin.

"Did I not always tell you," said he, "that WEALTH was within the reach of every man of talent? Did I not always tell you I would some day turn my wits to golden account, and have I not redeemed my promise?"

"Yes," said I; "and in all your exultation, pray do not forget to thank the guardian angel who preserved you from wretchedness, contempt, and Angelina."

"You *are* my guardian angel," he replied, warmly squeezing my hand; "and as the best requital I can offer for your services, pray let me urge you to attempt the liberation of Clara M'Neile; if there 's danger I will gladly share it with you, but I do not think there can be much; at all events we can't do worse than fail."

I consented, after some deliberation; and away we went to the little village of Drumdaily, in the county of Tipperary, which adjoined the domain of Barrington park, where, as I have already observed, the lady was closely impri-

soned. Our ostensible motive in taking up our sojourn in the village, was the neighbourhood of the Gaulty mountains, on which we spoke of shooting grouse.

On our first day's ramble, we carefully inspected the walls of the extensive park which seemed, at first sight, to defy all ordinary interlopers. They were built of solid masonry, and were from twelve to fourteen feet in height; unbroken, save by the well guarded gates and wickets, three or four of which occurred in the ample circuit of the park. From a rising ground near the village, we caught a distant view of the mansion, which appeared embowered in a lofty grove of sycamore and oak, nearly in the centre of the domain. On a close examination of the park wall, there seemed only one spot at which it was possible to scale it, and that was where the rugged branch of an elm stretched over the enclosure, and drooped its extremity towards the field without. "If we were once astride upon that

branch," said Murrough, "the rest would be all plain sailing; to-morrow we will bring a rope, and sling ourselves up with its assistance."

"Pray heaven we may not be more anxious to get out than to get in."

"What, Jack! does thy noble spirit flag? Faint heart ne'er won fair lady. Had I been cowed by rebuffs and disappointments, would I now be in possession of my twelve-stone widow and my brewery?"

The following day, a little after twilight commenced, we set forth upon our adventure, provided with a good coil of rope; and a bag of provisions to sustain us in any delays we might encounter. We were also armed with a brace of pistols each; so that our accoutrements were equally well calculated to serve in a campaign of either love or war. We scaled the wall with the aid of the rope, without much difficulty, and proceeded under cover of the night in the direction of the mansion. Nearly an hour elapsed before we reached it;

for we twice lost our way in the mazy thickets of the ancient woods that sheltered the park. At length, with the aid of the avenue, on which we chanced to emerge, we found our way to the house, which stood about a gun-shot before us, when the low, savage growling of a watch-dog, quickly followed by a loud fierce bark, warned us not to intrude further without great preliminary caution. The barking soon subsided again into a growl, which continued at intervals; we remained perfectly motionless and silent for several minutes, reconnoitring the house.

It was a square, substantial mansion, similar to many of those which were erected in various parts of Ireland during the earlier portion of the last century; such as Lowtown house, in the county Westmeath, belonging to the Dopping family; or the old house of River-Lyons, about a mile from Philipstown, in the King's county, (which latter edifice is now in ruins.) In a word, it was one of those mansions in which the decidedly modern style of domestic

architecture began first to be introduced, in which feudal strength gave way to arrangements of internal convenience and comfort; while the exterior presented an appearance of extent and solidity sufficiently imposing, and not unmixed with occasional architectural ornament.

The house stood in the centre of a square level space of something more than an acre, surrounded with a moated terrace. The area between this terrace and the mansion was laid out in formal shrubberies, whose straight yew hedges, long untrimmed, had shot up to a height nearly equal to that of the numerous forest trees which were scattered along the verge of the moat. These trees had once surrounded the moat in regular ranks, but their lines were now broken, as many of them had from time to time been felled for firewood, and others, decayed from age, had fallen in the storms of many a successive winter. The dark yews, dimly seen in the faint light of the moon's first quarter, imparted an aspect of se-

pulchral solemnity and gloom to the scene. Not a ray escaped from any of the windows, save the twinkle of a taper from the upper story. The apartment whence it issued, our fancy immediately converted into that of Clara and her aunt. The moat lay between us and the house; the water-gates and sluices were long since decayed, so that the fosse was dry, except where a shallow plash of water here and there, faintly glimmering in the imperfect light, marked some inequality of the ground at the bottom.

General report had assigned to the inmates of this prison-house, the limited freedom of the park; and it did not seem improbable that Barrington M'Neile, confiding in the security of his high boundary walls, might permit to his prisoners full liberty to range within their precincts. Meantime, while these conjectures occupied our minds, the influence of sleep began to weigh upon our senses; the month was August, and the night was warm, so that a grassy pillow in the open air was no formi-

dable lot. A huge evergreen oak, whose branches feathered to the ground, we selected as our canopy, and wrapping our cloaks closely round us, we committed ourselves to repose.

An hour had scarcely elapsed, when I awoke, at the same time disturbing the slumbers of Murrough.

"What ails you?" he asked—but *in a whisper;* for he had the fear of the watch-dog before him.

"A qualm of conscience," answered I.

"Pooh! is that all? About what, pray?"

"The Etonian's luggage; you know we should return his property, not being regular knights of the road."

"Curse your ill-timed morality, Jack! you've spoiled the pleasantest dream I ever had. The scoundrel's swag has been returned long ago, through father M'Grab, indorsed '*Restitution of penitent thieves;*' so quiet your d——d conscience, and let me go to sleep."—And Murrough relapsed into slumber.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"'Tis almost twelve, and awful midnight 's near;
Who comes with weary, solitary pace,
In darkness clad ? * * * * *
Now silence reigns, and sleep, o'er half mankind
His drowsy empire holds."

THE FRIENDLY RIVALS.

EARLY on the following morning we awoke, and patiently awaited the appearance of some of the inmates of the house. The foliage of the tree under which we stood, afforded an impenetrable screen. We could plainly see the mansion from occasional openings in the leaves; but it was wholly impossible that any person could descry us from without the circuit of our oak. As the night air had sharpened our appetites, we applied ourselves to the contents of the wallet of provisions with an eager assiduity that quite banished love from our memories until the

meal was at an end. Shortly afterwards we beheld a surly looking female domestic issue from a side-door, and advance a few paces on the gravel sweep before the house. She looked around her for a moment, and then called "Neptune! Neptune!" on which the shaggy mastiff, whose barking had alarmed us the preceding night, made his appearance, stretched, yawned, shook his rough coat, and sulkily followed her into the house. We waited several hours ere any other inmate of the mansion appeared. At length, when the sun was high in the heavens, the ponderous hall-door was opened with much portentous creaking of hinges, and a young lady slowly advanced towards the terrace, alternately bestowing her attention on a book which she held, and casting a listless look around her.

"That is surely Clara!" whispered Murrough; "now is your time, Jack! now!"

I immediately descended the side of the fosse, and following the direction the fair apparition had taken, watched her from the

shade of one of the yew hedges until she arrived at the angle of the terrace which formed the termination of the long, straight walk. She paused for a moment or two, turned carelessly over one or two leaves of her book, and then sauntered leisurely back towards the spot which I occupied. She passed within an arm's length of the part of the hedge in which I lay perdu, and, as she passed, I ventured to protrude my head from the closely matted branches. She started; but not so much as to manifest any embarrassment or fear.

"Do not be afraid, Miss M'Neile," said I, "I come to liberate you."

Her countenance expressed much astonishment, but preserving an air of perfect self possession and composure, she said, "For heaven's sake conceal yourself, or you will be seen by the last person who should see you." I promptly obeyed by withdrawing myself into the centre of the hedge; and well was it for me that I did so; for that moment the surly, duenna-looking domestic whom I had seen

before, appeared at the part of the terrace that adjoined the house, and advanced a few paces along the walk. Clara's eyes were intently buried in her book, and she strolled slowly onwards to the end of the moat. After looking around for a minute or two, the domestic withdrew; and Clara, in repassing the place of my concealment, threw herself upon a rustic seat immediately adjoining the hedge, and said in a low voice, and without raising her eyes from the book, "Do not show your head from the hedge—remain exactly where you are, and answer my question. — Do you know my uncle?"

"If you mean Mr. Barrington M'Neile," replied I, "I have not the honour of knowing him personally; but I know him by report; and I feel indignant, in common with every one of manly feeling, at the tyranny he exercises over you, and over his lady."

"May I ask to whom I am indebted for this sympathy?"

"My name, madam, is Grant; O'Brien

Grant; I am member of parliament for the borough of Garrydangan."

"Oho!" said Clara quickly, "you are the gentleman then, who attacked lord Ballyduff's friend at the head of a gang, frightened him out of his wits and nearly out of his life, and after spiriting him over to England in a fishing smack, got yourself returned for the borough in his absence, through an error of the foolish electors?"

"I confess, miss M'Neile, that the electors did me the favour to select me as their representative, and also that I have the good fortune to bear the same name with the gentleman to whom you have alluded; but I really know not on what grounds you honour me by supposing that I attacked him in the desperate style of a brigand, or that I was in any manner accessory to his disappearance."

"Well, no matter," replied Clara laughing; "perhaps I do not think the worse of you for it, for I knew your namesake in England, and I never knew a more effeminate milksop—he

well deserved some chastisement. But, once more I ask you, on your honour as a gentleman, do you know my uncle?"

"On my honour, as a gentleman, I solemnly assure you that I do not."

"Well—I must believe your assurance, besides which your voice has the sound of honest sincerity; and at all events we must be friends, as it is nearly four years since I have seen the face of any one except sulky eavesdropping menials, so a friendly human countenance is a treat indeed. But if you knew my uncle! O! I should shudder to trust you, for you know not of what he is capable. I should fear you were a treacherous emissary sent to trepan us. And briefly now,—for I cannot long remain here,—what is it you propose to do?"

"To liberate you and your aunt."

"My good sir, you know not the difficulties you have to encounter; the gates are all watched—and speaking of that, how, in the

name of astonishment, did you manage to effect your entrance ?"

I detailed the manner in which we had scaled the wall.

" Well, Mr. Grant, you cannot expect my aunt to emulate your agility; and unless you can also liberate her, I will not quit our prison-house. For myself, I could easily climb trees and walls with a little assistance; I spent three months at the female gymnasium in Paris, under mademoiselle Huguenin's instructions, and I think myself a tolerable proficient in climbing ropes and poles. But in order to mature our project, I must tell you exactly the portion of liberty we are allowed. We dare not stir out of doors till after breakfast, but then we are permitted to range unrestrained through the park until dinner-time. At first, a servant used to follow us wherever we went, but latterly they have let us roam alone, confiding, I presume, in the height of the park wall. After dinner we must stay

within doors, and shortly afterwards the corridor from which our apartments open is locked up, so we cannot stir until breakfast-time next morning again. But our freedom to ramble through the park is a great point in our favour; and therefore, — observe, — our escape, should we seriously attempt it, must be made in the daytime. I much wish that you could see my aunt; I am sure, if she thought it at all practicable, she would make any effort to escape from this irksome confinement."

"How many servants have you got in the house?" I asked.

"Only two; the old butler, and that sagacious duenna whom you saw a while ago."

"Why, that is not a formidable force."

"But they are both as watchful as Argus," she replied; "and when either goes to the village, they generally leave some substitute; or if not, the gate-keepers are sure to redouble their vigilance. Have you any assistant in this chivalrous mission?"

"Yes, madam; Mr. Murrough O'Driscoll, the member for Galway, is concealed beneath that evergreen oak."

"Bless me! I am very much indebted to the honourable house! But I must leave you now, to acquaint my aunt with our chance of escape, and to reconnoitre the garrison; do not stir until I return."

She left me, and more than an hour elapsed ere I saw her again. When she came, she re-seated herself on the bench by the hedge, and said, "My aunt is desirous to see you, Mr. Grant, and in half an hour you may venture to enter the house, as the coast will be perfectly clear. Old Martha has gone to the village to attend her niece's wedding, the butler will follow shortly, and all the stragglers of the place will be drawn away to the festivity; besides which, to-morrow, I learn, will be fair day at Knockgallager, which is only two miles from our village, and the servants have often gone to fairs, so I think we have promising facilities for effecting our

project. I heard the old butler awhile ago desiring M'Cartney the porter to take his post at the house, and I am perfectly certain that the magical attraction of the wedding will seduce M'Cartney from his vigilance, as well as the other domestics. I shall just see how affairs are circumstanced at present."

As she spoke, she quitted me, entered the house, and in a few minutes returned with the intelligence that the butler had deserted his post, and M'Cartney had not yet come to relieve guard. "So now," added she, "you may safely venture to the presence of my aunt, and when I have conducted you into our prison-house, I shall summon forth your friend from his oak-tree."

We then proceeded through a double row of high yew hedges, whose matted canopy almost excluded daylight from the alley beneath, which terminated at a side door of the mansion.

"I wish we could enter here," said Clara;

" but our only mode of ingress is at the hall-door; the servants have the keys of all the rest."

I rapidly followed her into the hall, and up a stair which led to the top of the house; there we entered a corridor, at the farther end of which was the sitting-room of Mrs. Barrington M'Neile and her niece.

" In the days of my uncle's first rigour," said Clara, " this attic room was assigned us as our apartment, and although the rigidity of our restraint has in many respects been relaxed, yet we still retain our little suite of garrets. We should be desirous to change them if we felt superstitiously inclined, for there 's a story told of the inner apartment that shows at least that our ancient mansion is not a whit behind its neighbours in the dignity of ghostly terrors. Indeed, I believe it was the hope of terrifying us to death that led my uncle to insist on our occupying this exalted suite. Aunt," she continued, gracefully waving

her hand, "allow me to present Mr. Grant—I hope I soon may call him our deliverer; I must hasten to summon Mr. O'Driscoll."

And forth she tripped, leaving me alone with Mrs. Barrington M'Neile, a solemn elderly lady, with a countenance expressive of constitutional melancholy.

"You must think me extremely ungrateful, Mr. Grant," said she, "that I do not thank you with the warmth your merits demand; but I feel myself oppressed with strange and indefinable fears. Now do not, I implore you, deceive me. As you are a man and a gentleman, has Mr. M'Neile any knowledge of, or concern with, your visit here?"

I earnestly repeated the assurance I had already given Clara.

"That is well," she replied; "oh, I trust you—I *must* trust you; you could not be so base as to deceive us: I will run any risks that may be necessary to get free from the control of that man."

Clara hastily re-entered with Murrough.

"Let us sit in the inner room," said she; "if M'Cartney should come, he must attend us here;" and, accordingly, our little party adjourned to the inner apartment, where we continued to converse in whispers.

"If we could get unobserved to the southern corner of the park," said Clara, "I think we might escape to-day; if the thing be practicable, it were folly to wait a single moment; at the southern corner there is a huge old ivy plant that covers the wall, and I think its thick strong stems would assist us to ascend; and, at all events, if we were once on the top of the wall, instead of being exposed to observation, we would be quite concealed among the clusters of its foliage. I have no arrangements to make; my toilette is complete; aunt, you had better make up your mind to act promptly."

"My dear Clara, you know I have recently been very ill—I fear that I shall not have nerve to support me through it all;" and the poor woman trembled with doubt and apprehension. "If any of our jailors should see our

attempt, they would redouble the rigour of our imprisonment. I feel quite too much exhausted and agitated to attempt an escape until to-morrow. Then, I trust and think I shall have more strength."

Clara looked disappointed at this delay, but did not urge her aunt further.

I could not help expressing my admiration of the view which the window of the room commanded. It looked over the lower part of the extensive domain, commanding a broad sweep of forest, the hoary growth of centuries.

"What a noble prospect!" exclaimed Murrough.

"It has long been hateful to me," observed Clara, "from a sense of imprisonment; and the moment I find myself beyond the walls, I shall deem the happiest of my life."

At the distance of less than a furlong from the house, the ground sank into a precipitous dell, on the verge of which stood a gigantic ash-tree.

"That tree," said she, "has its legend; the trunk is hollow, and was once inhabited by Donacha Rû na Gæragh *, a notorious and desperate freebooter. No one could discover the place of his retreat, as he had made a door of unbarked timber, rough from the forest, which he accurately fitted to the cavity, and which would deceive the most inquisitive eye; and the path to his lurking place was so intricate that no one save himself could trace it. My grandfather made several efforts to *hound* him out, and as a reward for his pains he nearly lost his life; for one evening he was sitting in his dining-room window, (which fronts the same direction,) quietly drinking off a glass of Burgundy, when a ball from the freebooter's gun drove the glass in shivers from his lips. Search was immediately made, but in vain; for Donacha had shut himself up in his tree and could not be found."

* Red Donald of the inches, i. e. meadows or the banks of

" Upon my word, he was an interesting ruffian, Miss M'Neile."

" He had the surest stroke and truest aim," said she, " that ever were known in this country. Various stories are told of his skill; among others, it is said that he once had a wager with a butcher in Drumdaily, which of them should strike the *nicest* blow. The butcher took his hatchet, and clove down a backbone of beef at a single stroke, to a mark he had made on the bone. Donacha immediately placed his own foot upon the block, and taking the hatchet, clove down his shoe at a stroke exactly between two of his toes. Was not that an exploit?"

rivers. There was a freebooter of this name, who frequented several woods in the south of Ireland, and of whom these stories are told. Tradition adds, that being one day ensconced in his hollow tree, the secret of which he never divulged to any one, he beheld his wife and a soldier at no great distance in the forest, apparently on terms of such close familiarity that the husband could not brook it; he fired, and killed the soldier on the spot. He lurked for many years in the wood of Macromp, in the domain of Robert Hedges Eyre, Esq.

" Indeed it was no ordinary feat."

" If I had leisure or spirits, I could amuse you with the legendary tales of this old park and mansion. Do you see that mark upon the wainscot ? "

" Yes."

" What do you think it resembles ? "

" Blood—old blood, I should think."

" You shall hear what our family tradition says about it. This room, you must know, was my grandfather's sleeping-room for several years before his death. It is said, that one stormy night a gentleman in black petitioned for admission, and on being introduced into my grandfather's presence, informed him he was come to claim the fulfilment of his part of a contract they had made many years before, by which, it is averred, the old gentleman had bartered his salvation to his sable visitor for a certain sum of gold. My grandfather earnestly petitioned, (as who would not ?) for extension of the term ; but the devil was for a long time inexorable. At length my grandfather ob-

tained, with much intreaty, permission to remain on earth until the candle which was burning on the table should have been consumed. The devil consented to a request apparently so moderate, for the candle was not an inch long; and the instant his consent was obtained, the old Squire extinguished the candle, and locking it up in yonder press, put the key in his pocket, saying that as he now had the power in his own hands, he would take good care it should never be burnt at all. Away flew the devil, enraged at being jockeyed; and my grandsire lived for many years, until it chanced that once, in a severe illness, he committed the key of the press to a domestic to procure him some medicine. The servant's taper was dying in the socket, and seeing the fatal inch of candle in the press, he immediately lighted it. All was quiet as long as the candle was burning; but the instant the last spark expired, a tremendous clap of thunder shook the air, and the dev suddenly appeared in a blaze of sulphureous light.

Seizing the invalid by the neck, he hurled him out of bed with a force that dashed out his brains against the wainscot. There, sir, are the marks your sagacity discovered to be blood. I hope we may all make a more respectable exit than my grandsire. The household were very much horrified, and deserted this suite altogether for many years, until uncle Barrington strictly commanded that my aunt and I should occupy it, in the hope, I suppose, of shortening our lives with superstitious terrors."

At this moment we heard M'Cartney enter the outer apartment; on which Clara and her aunt immediately quitted the room in which we were sitting, and I think Clara gently locked the door and put the key in her pocket.

"Well," said Murrough in a whisper, "what do you think of her?"

"A lively, spirited girl, and pretty enough. She has something foreign in her face, yet not unpleasingly so."

"Will she do?"

"Do? admirably well if she consents, but there's the difficulty."

"Now I will wager you a twelvemonth's profits of the brewery that she consents. What, do you think such a frank and animated creature would refuse her hand to the gallantry, spirit, and good looks that rescued her from thraldom?"

While we thus conversed, Clara returned with a look of deep anxiety—"Did you hear the sound of horses' feet in the court?" she asked.

"No," answered Murrough and I together; "there was not any noise since you left us."

"Hark! there it is again!" cried Clara; "this side of the house is distant from the court, or we would hear it more plainly."

I listened, and now that my attention was directed to the sound, I distinctly heard the distant trampling of horses in the court. Clara returned to the outer apartment, and almost immediately reappeared, accompanied by her

aunt. They seemed anxious and uneasy concerning the noise they had heard, and Clara was desired by her relative to go down stairs, and ascertain, if she could, whether any person had arrived.

She accordingly descended, and asked M'Cartney, whom she met in the corridor, whether any one had recently come? He replied in the negative; on which she proceeded to the court in person, but the stable doors were locked, and she did not see any attendants in the premises.

When dinner was over, the corridor was locked up as usual; and I do confess, that we did not feel perfectly easy at having our retreat thus effectually cut off, in such a mansion and under such circumstances. When all danger of M'Cartney's appearance was ended for the evening, the ladies adjourned to the apartment they had allotted for our use, and we conversed with more freedom than before on the subject of their imprisonment. I elicited from Mrs. M'Neile, that in the event of Clara's

death, the fortune to which she was entitled would revert to her uncle, which accounted in some measure for his cruel and tyrannical conduct. He had used all his influence at one period to compel her to marry his son, but in vain; which greatly increased his hostility towards her. But for the tyranny exercised over his wife, the only assignable motive, was her having countenanced Clara's independent assertion of her own free choice.

The night wore apace, and the ladies retired to their dormitory. We reposed on cloaks and carpets, which formed a pleasanter couch than that to which we had been doomed on the preceding night. We soon fell asleep; and the legend that Clara narrated still haunting me imperfectly in slumber, I thought that I saw the old squire in his bed, pale and haggard; the dark stain upon the wainscot assumed the form of a hideous face, and grinned and gibbered at me; I thought I made desperate efforts to escape, which were invariably frustrated by some unseen influence; and

wearied with my fruitless struggles, I flung myself upon the floor, and gnashed my teeth with rage and disappointment. A door in the wainscot seemed to open slowly, and exhibited a hand unconnected with any human form, and clutching a taper, which I watched with agonized eagerness, as I felt an indistinct conviction that some dreadful catastrophe was immediately to follow, on its being consumed. The taper gradually burned away, and as it nearly approached its extinction, the unearthly hand extended it towards me, as if to shew how near the fatal moment was approaching. I shall never forget the long, bony, and discoloured fingers—they appeared alive with terrible expression—I shrank back as they advanced, and made an abortive effort to escape; the taper soon expired, a tremendous crash was heard, and I started from my dream in an agony of terror. But the noise which had mingled with the visions of slumber was real, and continued to increase; our chamber-door was open, and Clara appeared in a night dress,

a lamp in her hand, and her face expressive of the utmost horror and astonishment.

"Help! help!" she exclaimed; "for God's sake, help! we shall be murdered!"

In a moment Murrough and I were on our feet, our cloaks wrapped around us, our pistols in our hands, and Murrough armed with an ancient broadsword, with which Clara had supplied him at the moment. The noise appeared to proceed from some persons attempting to break down the ceiling of the dormitory occupied by Clara and her aunt. We posted ourselves behind a window curtain, deeming it most prudent to await the result in ambush. Part of the plaster had already fallen, which occasioned the crash I had heard in my sleep, and a hand appeared trying to break away the laths. Murrough sprang forward, and slashed with his broadsword at the hand, with such effect that two of the fingers fell bleeding on the floor. The hand was immediately withdrawn, and a heavy groan was heard; a few minutes elapsed, when a face was protruded

through the aperture, defended with a strong wire mask, such as those which are used in fencing. My pistol had been aimed at the aperture, and the instant the masked face appeared I pulled the trigger; the ball entered at the neck; but whether the wound was mortal or not I had no means of knowing. There was a heavy sound overhead, as if a body were dragged along; it soon ceased, and nearly two hours passed away, during which Mrs. M'Neile continued in a state of the most pitiable agitation. Clara, however, appeared to have acquired nerve to meet any emergency, for the fluttered air that had marked her on the first alarm had now quite disappeared, and she sate by her aunt collected and firm. At length she rose, and beckoning to me to accompany her, ventured out upon the corridor, the door at the farther end of which was kept fast locked, as I have already mentioned. There was a bolt which secured it on the inner side, and Clara fastened this bolt, placing at the same time her finger on her lips to enforce silence. We

were then retreating with the same tiptoe caution with which we had advanced, when the sound of voices whispering became distinguishable from the other side of the door. She immediately extinguished her lamp, and we listened, but notwithstanding that our ears were sharpened by the danger of our situation, we were only able to hear the confused murmur of sounds through the thickness of the door. I listened at the keyhole, straining my attention to the utmost, and fancied that I heard one of the speakers propose to open the door. I could not, indeed, be quite certain that this was the purport of the whisper; but my impression that it was so, was strengthened by the answer, which was given in a more audible tone:—

"No, sir,—that would never do—I saw a light inside this minute, and depend upon it that the corridor is watched and guarded."

"Who the devil can it be;" resumed the first voice, as nearly as I could gather the pur-

port, "that the women have got to protect them?"

"That's more than I can tell," replied the louder and less cautious speaker, "nor how the devil they got into the house. But are you sure *he* is done for?"

"I think he is—I think there's no hope of him; though the devil, who has always stood his friend, may bring him through yet. But why do we stand wasting our time here, if you do not approve of attacking them on this side?"

"Let the job alone for heaven's sake, I counsel you—you're too daring—you are only half a man, remember—you are maimed with that sword cut, for you thought you had only women to deal with, and see what came of it."

"I'd venture if I dared," answered the other, with a low groan of pain; "for I long to be revenged, and they're shut up there like rats in a trap."——

The rest of the whisper sank into utter indis-

tinctness, and soon ceased altogether, and we heard the retreating footsteps of the speakers. We spent the night in much alarm, lest the assailants should return reinforced by numbers; but our fears were not realized; they came not, and the hours passed quietly away until dawn. The appearance of daylight seemed to reassure Mrs. M'Neile; and as for Clara, her conduct was that of a heroine throughout the whole adventure. With the aid of a table and chair, I ascended through the aperture the ruffians had made in the ceiling, and quickly ascertained that an easy passage from the leads through a neighbouring trap-door, conducted to a staircase that descended to the lower apartments, and through which we might escape without the necessity of traversing the corridor or forcing the door at the end of it. Some risk must be run in adopting this mode of escape; but we deemed it far better to encounter it, whatever it might be, than await the repetition of such scenes as we had witnessed. With considerable difficulty we got

Mrs. M'Neile upon the leads; but she walked on them with ease and safety, as the gutters were broad, and the parapet nearly breast high. Clara's agility put ours to shame. When we reached the staircase already mentioned, "Now," said she, "I must advise the utmost caution; this staircase opens on the butler's pantry, and perhaps M'Cartney may be there; step lightly."

All our care could not prevent the slight creaking of the old stairs as we descended.

"Pause for an instant," said Clara. Her injunctions were laws; we stopped, and she stealthily proceeded one or two flights lower. We heard the sudden clapping of a door which was instantly locked, and a voice from within vociferated for liberation. Clara tripped lightly up stairs, holding in her hand the key of the pantry; "I have locked M'Cartney up," said she; "I stole upon him unawares—the door was a very little open, and his face was turned to the window. Make haste—we have not a moment to lose."

We immediately quitted the house, and proceeded to the part of the park wall which Clara recommended as being the most easily scaled from the inner side. We reached it without meeting a living being, save the hares and deer that we startled from form or covert.

With the aid of our ropes, and the strong thick stems of ivy, Mrs. M'Neile was soon placed in safety on the top of the wall, where, as Clara had observed, the luxuriant branches afforded a perfect concealment. The country immediately beyond this spot, presented a bare, open moor, gradually rising for nearly a quarter of a mile, until it reached a long and ruinous dry stone fence that adjoined a deserted hovel. This miserable tenement had once been the habitation of some peasant, and after his family had quitted it in search of better fortunes, the neighbouring hinds had occasionally used it as a field house for cattle in severe weather. It was now, however, totally empty; a circumstance of which Murrough and I had become

aware, from having passed it once or twice in our grousing excursion.

The high road ran about two hundred yards on the farther side of this ruinous tenement, and the council, which we hastily held in our ivy bush, were unanimously of opinion that the best course was, that Murrough should hasten to the village to hire a chaise; while I should attend the ladies (the elder of whom was exceedingly fatigued) to the hovel, in which they might rest until the chaise should pass beneath it on the road. This plan was no sooner decided on, than Mrs. M'Neile was placed in the kind of swing seat we had formed of the rope, and gently lowered to the ground. Her nervous terror seemed every instant to increase, and impeded our progress so much, that notwithstanding the assistance she received from Clara and me, it was fully half an hour ere we reached the hut. A slight shower of rain came on, and as we sought shelter in the wretched habitation, we were rather sur-

prised to find the door fastened. The rain increased, and I tried to force it open; and in doing so I perceived that the weight which was opposed to my efforts was not the unyielding substance of an inanimate mass, but that it receded from the force of my blows, and then immediately resumed its previous position. This convinced me that the door was kept shut by some person leaning against it, and I redoubled my exertions to procure admittance.

"Do not persist, for heaven's sake," said Mrs. M'Neile; "I do not mind the shower, I assure you."

But as she spoke, her teeth chattered and her frame shivered, and it seemed quite evident that her strength was not equal to support the terror she had undergone. I mustered all my weight for another assault on the door, and hurled my person against it with such violence that it yielded, and we entered the hovel.

Even Clara started at the sight that presented itself; her aunt sank helpless on the

floor. Stretched on a few rude boards laid together, a corpse was extended in the centre of the hut: it was not clad in grave clothes, the limbs being carelessly wrapped in a cloak, while a cloth covered the head and breast. A tall and handsome young man, whose well formed features were deadly pale, and wore a very sinister expression, was the only person in attendance on the corpse. He wore a military cloak; and started, as if suddenly stung by a venomous reptile, as we entered. Clara was the first to speak.

"In the name of heaven, Henry," said she, "what has brought you here?"

He did not immediately reply, for he actually seemed choaking for utterance.

"Henry," said she again, "whose is this corpse? Is it—gracious Providence!—is it as I suspect—is this the body of my uncle?"

The young man at length answered with a painful effort, "It is my father's body, Clara; he and I were waylaid last night, and he was murdered by robbers." His utmost efforts

were ineffectual to add another word. At this moment our attention was called to Mrs. M'Neile, who had fainted.

"Oh, Mr. Grant," said Clara, "assist my aunt! run—get water—No! I will get it myself—I would not for worlds be left alone with yonder man!" and she wildly ran from the hut, unprovided with any means of conveying the water, and scarcely knowing what direction she would take. The stranger appeared about to follow. "Pass at your peril, sir," said I, presenting a pistol at his body; "you quit not this place with life." He only replied with a look of mortal hatred and defiance, and remained motionless. Several minutes passed in anxious silence, when the sound of wheels on the road near the common, led me to hope that Murrough was approaching with the carriage. I looked from the door, and saw Clara waving her handkerchief to Murrough, who quitted the carriage in obedience to the summons. When he entered the hut, he gazed intently at the strange and frightful

scene that it presented. Clara had informed him that the young man was Henry M'Neile, son to her deceased uncle, and the person for whom her hand had been originally destined. Murrough approached the corpse, and was about to raise the cloth that covered the face—

"Stop, sir!" exclaimed M'Neile, with a gesture of impotent impatience. Murrough looked at him, with a hard and earnest gaze, and unmindful of his interruption, raised the cloth. It was evident that death had been caused by a pistol wound in the neck. "This is the man," said Murrough, "whose head was protruded through the ceiling of Mrs. M'Neile's bedroom last night;" and he fixed a searching look on Henry as he spoke. Henry impatiently attempted to replace the cloth; but a gust of wind blew aside his cloak, and showed that his arm rested in a sling.

"And *you* are the man," continued Murrough, "whose hand was maimed in your infamous attempt." Henry spoke not, and Murrough produced the severed fingers which he carried

in a linen cloth. Henry shuddered with mingled rage and terror; and Murrough and I simultaneously seizing him, compelled him to exhibit his wounded hand, which lacked the first and second fingers. The proof was complete; and as we had him wholly in our power, we thought for a while of surrendering him up to justice,—but Clara interfered.

"No," said she, "his punishment has been severe enough, and his father's life has paid the penalty of his crimes. I fear him not now; for as I am possessed of my freedom, he has not the power to injure me further. Spare him, and may God grant him repentance and amendment."

We quitted the hovel, bearing Mrs. M'Neile in our arms. She had recovered her consciousness, but was wholly unable to walk to the carriage. On entering it, we proceeded forthwith on the northern road, as it was Mrs. M'Neile's wish to arrive as soon as possible in Dublin, where she purposed to reside for the future. Murrough moved homewards, having

rendered me all the assistance he deemed necessary; and I accompanied the liberated captives to the metropolis, taking care to avail myself of all the facilities the journey afforded to improve my claim on Clara's favour. This was no difficult task; for she seemed to consider her hand a debt of gratitude which she could not well escape from paying; nor, do I think, if the truth must be told, that she had any very strong disinclination to discharge that debt.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"To sum the whole, the close of all."

SWIFT.

Mrs. M'Neile placed her niece's affairs and her own in the hands of an eminent lawyer; her husband had endeavoured to embroil them as much as it was possible, but it was not in his power to deprive her of her very handsome jointure, and the family residence in Rutland Square, which was her's by her articles of marriage.

Clara's right to a considerable part of her fortune, however, seemed less satisfactorily defined. Some of the deeds connected with it had been concealed or destroyed by her uncle, and an active search was vainly made for them in all the repositories of their town house. The young lady's expectations, how-

ever, were still sufficiently good to render her a highly advantageous connexion. I pressed my suit, was accepted, and became her husband. The frivolous tales I had formerly heard of her levity, I found were utterly undeserving of credit; she had heard them herself, and disregarded them with great philosophy, attributing them all to the inventive brain of count Klopstockendock; who, à-propos, had quite disappeared from the circles of Dublin since his elopement with the misses O'Moore.

I had not been married to Clara for a year, when news arrived of the death of Mrs. M'Neile's stepson, Henry; he fell in a duel, into which he was betrayed by a quarrel arising from his dark, saturnine disposition. Barrington park, and the whole of the family estates devolved to Clara; so that I became the lord of an extremely extensive territorial and political interest.

I solemnized this valuable acquisition with a fête champetre to my county Tipperary

tenantry, which was given in one of the long, sweeping glades of the park, on as bright a summer's day as ever infused hilarity and mirth into the mercurial hearts of Irish peasants. They danced, they sang, and quaffed bumpers to the health of O'Brien Grant and his lady; and the merry groupes stretched away into the distant vista of the forest, half seen among the haycocks, which afforded delightful facilities for many a rustic flirtation.

I spent my time between Barrington park and the capital, enjoying my *otium cum dignitate* as well as the turbulence of 1798 permitted. After our exertions had succeeded in quelling that unnatural rebellion, we were much alarmed at the rumour of an equally unnatural attack upon the Irish constitution. The report was true; the Union was brought before the house at an early period of the session of 1799. Immediately, the utmost apprehension pervaded the patriotic party; the marquis of Corrin, although he would have supported the government on any other ques-

tion, was resolutely determined to stand fast by Ireland on this. Meetings of the Anti-Union members took place repeatedly at lord Charlemont's house in Rutland square, which seemed the rallying point where all the measures for opposing the ministerial project were suggested and matured. The recent rebellion had paralysed the kingdom; martial law still existed; so that the island lay prostrate in a state of the most helpless exhaustion, which afforded a peculiarly favourable opportunity for the introduction of a scheme so distasteful to the mass of the nation and so subversive of their interests. Every engine which corruption could command was put in requisition; lord C********** was indefatigably active in the patricidal work. I had personal experience of his efforts. One evening I was seated in earnest consultation with Mr. Shapland Carew, lord Corrin, and two or three members who had called at my house on their way to lord Charlemont's, when I was informed that a gentleman desired to see me in private.

I repaired to my study, and lord C********** was introduced. I repressed with exceedingly great difficulty my strong indignation at his presence, and commanded my feelings so far as to await his communication in silence. I neither sat, nor asked him to be seated, so we both continued standing.

" Sir," said his lordship, " I have long been anxious to have an opportunity of personally discussing with you the merits of the great measure which government are desirous to carry."

" My lord," I replied, " it is needless to occupy your time upon the subject here. All the communication I can possibly hold with your lordship respecting the measure in question, must be in the House of Commons."

" Nay, but," continued he, " I think I could be able to convince you that it would not injure Ireland."

" Argument," said I, " would be wholly thrown away on such a subject. I feel it would be worse than mockery to discuss it

for a moment with your lordship, supposing even that your real object in this visit is to debate its political results; for I believe most firmly that your lordship is as fully convinced, in the inmost recesses of your mind, of its ruinous tendency, as I am."

"Upon my honour, Mr. Grant, you wrong me; I *do* feel extremely desirous to discuss the question with you if you will permit me; and I am perfectly convinced it will benefit Ireland if adopted. I wish you would debate it with me."

"In the House of Commons, my lord, with pleasure; nowhere else. If you can train me to believe that the extinction of that institution which forms the chief, almost the only inducement to our aristocracy to reside at home, will not generate sweeping absenteeism—if you can convince me that the absence of the wealthy consumers from Ireland will foster and encourage manufacture and commerce—if you can convince me that the affairs of men or nations are better advanced and attended to by stran-

gers, than by the party most deeply concerned —if you can convince me that the interests of men or nations can be furthered by shackling their limbs, or fettering their natural and necessary energies—if you can convince me that the condition of the poor will be improved by breaking the strongest tie that binds the rich to home—if your lordship can work any of these miraculous changes in the present conviction of my reason, the scene of the achievement must be the House of Commons. Once more, my lord, I repeat that I can hold no further communication with your lordship in private—I have the honour to wish your lordship a good evening."

At these words I opened the door of the apartment, and motioned his lordship to take his departure.

"Mr. Grant," said he, "I intreat, as a favour, you will allow me to speak confidentially to you."

"NEVER, my lord. I can hold no confidence

whatever with the betrayer, the assassin of his country."

His lordship paused for an instant; an angry flush crossed his brow, and he seemed about to reply in a tone of hostility, for he was noted for what duellists call *spirit:* but probably reflecting that I was a declared foe to duelling, and having, in all likelihood, the prospect of more than enough of such encounters, he repressed his resentment, bowed low, and departed.

When I returned to our little council, one of the gentlemen asked me if my visitor had not been lord C**********. I replied in the affirmative.

"I guessed as much," said Mr. Shapland Carew; "he visited me last night, with the offer of a peerage and £50,000. I was thunderstruck at the unblushing audacity of the man, and I told him that if he did not immediately withdraw, I would detail his infamous offer in the House on the first opportunity. 'If you do,' replied he, nothing abashed, 'I

will immediately contradict your assertion, and *call you out* for aspersing my character.' These are the men, these are the means, in operation against Ireland! I scarcely need tell you I expelled him from my house with indignity."

"A peerage, indeed!" exclaimed lord Corrin; "a peerage will be a valuable commodity when there will be no House of Peers! An empty nickname! the mockery of honour, and if acquired by such means, the badge, as my old friend Mrs. Herbert says, of indelible infamy."

Our exertions for the session of 1799 were triumphant; the Union was defeated, and Dublin presented in every corner, a scene of rejoicing and delight, the like of which we may not hope to see again, until the day when the doors of the old House in College Green shall be re-opened for legislative purposes.

The following year came; the efforts of corruption were redoubled; the hated bill was introduced a second time into Parliament; I witnessed every stage of the proceedings; I

witnessed each convulsive throe of our expiring independence—I witnessed the " last scene of all "—I saw the mental torture with which our patriotic speaker, Foster, was compelled, by his official duty, to announce the success of the measure he detested; I saw the sorrow and disgust with which he flung the bill upon the table, and pronounced the fatal sentence that proclaimed that Ireland as a nation was extinguished.

Murrough had been frequently assailed with powerful temptations, but resisted them all with inflexible honesty. On one occasion he received an experimental visit from lord C**********'s well known agent, F***, whose diminutive stature procured him the familiar name of " Bantam." Murrough, immediately perceiving the design of his visit, gave him an unequivocal hint to withdraw, which was disregarded; upon which the Galwegian giant caught up his diminutive visitor by the collar, held him suspended a few moments in the air, shook him with very little ceremony, and

extruded him on the hall-door steps with so much more energy than politeness, that the reputation of poor F***'s uncourteous reception secured Murrough from any future attempts of a similar nature. He approved himself, indeed, a real patriot; he threw the whole weight of his influence, and what the Prime Serjeant humourously called his "bull-dog eloquence," into the scale of the Irish constitution.

There is little in my subsequent life worth recording. The reader may ask, what became of my old contemporary, miss St. Lawrence. She married a nobleman, of whom it is no slight praise to assert, that he was worthy, in every possible respect, of the hand of Henrietta. To an appreciation of her worth that fully equalled mine, (it could not exceed it,) he added the homage of a heart that was not, as mine had been, pre-occupied by another as fascinating object. Henrietta still lives, a grey-haired, venerable grandmother. Her old age is happy; and, certainly, few mortals have better deserved happiness.

She has had no less than eighteen sons and seven daughters, a reasonable share, we must acknowledge, of matrimonial comforts. These have, in turn, given birth to six and forty grandchildren; which liberal contribution to Daniel O'Connell's "ninth million," is a real public benefit, as this numerous progeny inherit, without an exception, the virtues of their excellent and venerable progenitress.

When I became the proprietor of Clara's hand, I claimed from uncle Henry the fulfilment of his ancient promise, to reward me with a large pecuniary settlement, for my highly meritorious acquisition of a wealthy wife.

"Um—um"—responded the old gentleman, —"devil of a hurry, Jack, you're in, to touch my cash. You must wait, my man, till I put on my oak surtout—I think you'll find that I haven't forgotten you, *then*."

Time rolled on, and uncle Henry, in the lapse of a very few years, donned his oak surtout, and went to sleep with his fathers. In

expectation of the promised legacy, I attended the reading of his will:—

He had married his cook about six months before his death, and left her every farthing he possessed.

I lost Clara ten years ago, and was thrown again a single man upon the world. I have, since then, made several efforts to supply her place with another partner; but I have invariably found my fair friends more disposed to criticise the grey locks and withered wrinkles of advancing age, than to connect themselves with the possessor of these venerable marks of senility. I am resolved, however, not to go down a sorrowing and lonely widower to the tomb, if I can possibly help it; and accordingly, within the last twelvemonth I have entered into a contract with a tall elderly spinster of my acquaintance, by which it is mutually agreed that we should each spend one year from the date of the contract in search of a spouse. If, before the end of the allotted time, either of us can procure an-

other mate, it will be a subject of rejoicing to the successful party, and a source of encouragement to the other. But, should *neither* of us find our attractions sufficiently potent to ensnare the affections of any desirable catch, the contract binds us to marry each other at the end of the year. We occasionally correspond by letter, in order to detail the progress of our several campaigns. Last week I received from the lady the following pithy epistle.

" MY DEAREST GRANT,

" No luck, I am afraid, in this quarter; I have not had a single offer since I came here. If you are not more fortunate than I have been, I much apprehend we are fated to come together at the end of the year.

" Ever, dearest,

" Your attached and faithful

" * * * * * *.

" P.S.—As a *dernier ressort*, I shall try the watering places."

Now I confess that I am strongly inclined to partake of the lady's apprehensions, for I cannot say that my own campaign has been hitherto a very flattering one. I therefore beg leave to represent to my fair readers, that my year of probation is rapidly drawing to a close; and if some of them will not quickly take compassion on my lonely situation, I shall have no alternative, at the end of the allotted time, but to marry the elderly spinster aforesaid; which union we are both disposed to regard as a *pis-aller*. Therefore, I beg once more to commit my case to the gentle breasts of the fair perusers of my lucubrations; merely premising that I am a hale, stout old fellow in the sixty-third year of my age, with a ruddy cheek, and snow-white hair. I have no objection to wear a wig if requisite, or to use Tricosian powder. My temper is unruffled, and my disposition excellent; and my willing adaptation of these manifest advantages to the purpose of securing domestic felicity, cannot for a moment be doubted, when it is remembered

how well my past matrimonial experience must qualify me to play the part of "a gentle and a loving lord."

The old town mansion in Rutland Square, which is fitted up and furnished in the richest style of 1790, awaits my wife's pleasure, should she feel inclined to spend her winters in the capital. One, and only one, restriction do I mean to impose: she must not quit Ireland.

I am always to be heard of at Kilnaflesk, should any of my readers feel inclined to take advantage of the offer I have made; I hope it may not be abortive, and that, ere long, it may produce the addition of another flower to the matrimonial chaplet of

"THE WIFE HUNTER."

G. Woodfall, Printer, Angel Court, Skinner Street, London.

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